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—Nancy Leigh DeMoss, author and host of *Revive Our Hearts* radio

THE NEW
eve
CHOOSING GOD'S BEST FOR YOUR LIFE



Foreword by
SHAUNTI FELDHAHN | **ROBERT LEWIS**
with Jeremy Howard

“Women today are inundated by confusing messages about who they ought to be. *The New Eve* goes straight to the heart of who they were created to be. Robert Lewis does a masterful job of weaving challenges, stories, and biblical truths together. This book will help women gain insights into making their unique lives better, richer, and more meaningful in a way that glorifies God.”

Gayle Carpenter

Chief Administrative Officer

Leadership Network

“Robert Lewis sounds a much-needed message as he calls women to walk in the feminine freedom and fullness that result from embracing our core biblical callings. *The New Eve* dispels the current cultural fog regarding what it means to be a woman by looking to God's design, as revealed in the Scripture, for wisdom, insight, and direction.”

Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Author and

Host of *Revive Our Hearts* radio

“Women today have unprecedented opportunities and possibilities before them, but this great new freedom also brings a new dilemma: how to make the best choices for their own good and that of their families. In *The New Eve*, Robert Lewis gives women of all ages a picture of what God intended for us from the beginning and a clear vision for how we make choices that liberate us to live with purposeful direction. No matter your stage in life, all women can benefit from his coaching. Having known Robert and his wife Sherard since college, I can confidently say this is not just great material. It is a reflection of two godly people who are always working to live marriage and family as God intended. I highly recommend it and hope it will be widely read.”

Barbara Rainey

FamilyLife Cofounder

and Author

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To women everywhere

who are bold enough
to trust Jesus Christ
with their lives and their priorities.

Eternity belongs to you.

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Foreword

I never thought a book written by a man could give me such an eye-opening picture of who I should be as a woman—or that it would have such a big impact on my life. It will impact your life, too ... if you let it.

It's All about How We Are Designed

Many of you might be familiar with Robert Lewis' organization, Men's Fraternity, that has somehow attracted hundreds of thousands of bleary-eyed men into early-morning video Bible studies across the country. While we might have thought men just wanted to have their own version of a good Beth Moore talking-to, there was something much deeper attracting these guys. Robert was giving them a vision, a model for what it means to be a godly, biblically-guided man in a culture that no longer agrees on what that ideal looks like—or whether it's even necessary. A model that men could measure their personal and professional life by ... and a challenge to change it if it didn't measure up.

Well, ladies, it's our turn. Many of us try to live a godly life and follow the Bible's specific precepts. But without ever intending to, we could still be fighting against how God has designed us—simply because the world of women looks so very different from the way it did in biblical times and we haven't had a modern-day model to go by.

This is not just an academic issue. We have professional and personal choices that were unheard of for women two thousand years ago; but God has still designed us as women in a specific way, and that design affects everything in our lives, whether we like it or not. Reading this book, I finally realized: I can commit my daily life and my eternal future to Christ, and I can try to follow the Bible's directives as best I can—but my most important choices could still be at odds with how God has designed me! And if that's the case, I will have regret instead of contentment. What's more, I will drastically limit my ability to be a good steward of the gifts God has given me.

Whether you are a stay-at-home mom or an airplane-hopping executive, a student or a senior adult, this book will give you a modern, encouraging vision for what it means to be a godly, biblically guided woman in the twenty-first century. In an era where women rightfully have high expectations personally and professionally, and *can* do almost anything we set our minds to, this model will help us navigate what we *should* do—and should not do.

Some Very Personal Encouragement

I know this has profoundly helped me. As some of you might guess, I'm extremely busy both professionally and personally. I'm a best-selling author, columnist, and traveling speaker; but I'm also a wife and a mom to two young children. I try to be a supportive wife to my husband's entrepreneurial business, but I also have my own.

And privately, for years, I have been torn by how to balance it all; how to keep all

the plates spinning. With *The New Eve*, I finally feel like I have a clear and realistic model that I can look up to and respect as a modern Christian woman; something that can help me make the decisions that will lead to relief, delight, and fulfillment instead of regret.

That doesn't mean those decisions are easy. For me, it has meant a willingness to reexamine some professional opportunities in light of personal ones. For others, it may mean examining whether you are fully utilizing your unique God-given gifts for the impact He intends you to have. But once you make these decisions, they will *fit*. You—like me—will feel like you're finally functioning in the way you were designed for. The specific answers will be wonderfully individual for every wonderfully individual woman, but the vision of womanhood is the same.

Be willing to be challenged, sisters. The end result will be worth it.

—Shaunti Feldhahn

Acknowledgments

Two are better than one,” the Scripture says, “because they have a good return for their labor” (Eccles. 4:9). I've found this to be true in my writing, and *The New Eve* is certainly no exception. Each book is clearly “better” because of the help given by a number of very talented and supportive people.

First and foremost on this list is Jeremy Howard. Shortly after finishing his Ph.D. program, Jeremy made a courageous move to Little Rock to assist me in a number of writing projects. I can honestly say that without Jeremy's energetic spirit, superb professionalism, and writing partnership, *The New Eve* would have never found its way into print. Thanks, Jeremy, for all your hard work and the positive attitude in which you did it. It has been a privilege working with you. My best to you and Simone and your family as you now embark on a new writing adventure.

I owe a huge debt of gratitude as well to a number of special women—Gayle Carpenter, Deborah Harris, Cheryl Rainy, Virginia Robinson, and Linda Slaton—who took the time to read my ever-evolving manuscript and offer their insightful comments and helpful suggestions. Ladies, please know that your input made this book better in a number of significant ways. A special thanks to my wonderful daughters, Rebekah Lewis and Elizabeth James, for the hours they put in reading and re-reading specific chapters and talking out with me various ideas and concepts. You both made a real difference. I would also like to say a special thank-you to Shaunti Feldhahn for going the extra mile and giving me her in-depth analysis of the manuscript. What a much needed assist that was!

Much of the artwork you find in *The New Eve* came from the creative mind of Nancy Carter. Nancy has helped me with graphics on a number of my books through the years and always does so with a bright smile and a servant's heart. Thanks *again*, Nancy.

I also want to thank Lisa Fischer for being willing to carve out time for me in her busy schedule to serve as my host for the Discussion Starter DVD that was produced to support New Eve discussion groups and the study guide found in the back of the book. (This DVD is available at www.mensfraternity.com.) You did a great job, Lisa, and you made it fun too.

Speaking of video, Jud Archer and his crew—Steve Childress, Thomas Rogers, Claes Jonasson, James Groves, Nancy Shepard, and Dave Calhoun—deserve a special high five for the great work they did in filming and editing. Jud, it was like old times being with you again in the editing suite.

Dr. Margaret Feurtado graciously took the lead in holding this project up in prayer, and how grateful and blessed I was that she did! Thank you, Margaret.

Ruthie George also deserves a special mention. It was Ruthie who first urged me to speak on this subject and later gave me the opportunity to do so while she served as the Women's Ministry Director of our church. Ruthie, I hope you like what you started.

Thanks to Helen Carter, my administrative assistant, for all the support she gave

Jeremy and me during the long days of this writing project. Each day we were greeted with a big, bright “GOOD MORNING!”

Then there is the publishing team at B&H, beginning with David R. Shepherd and Leonard G. Goss, who head the editorial squad. Lisa Parnell was the project manager for this book, Diana Lawrence oversaw the cover design, and David Chandler was responsible for physical production of the book and the DVD. Thank you all for believing in this project and making it come to life. It's been a pleasure working with you.

Finally, to my wife Sherard, it's hard to know what to say because whatever it would be, it wouldn't be enough. You are priceless ... and always have been!

It really is true, “Two—and many more—are better than one.”

Preface

I know what you're thinking. It's the obvious question. *What's a man doing writing a book for women?* Personally, I've asked myself that same question many times over the past year as I've compiled this manuscript. On the occasions when I've had the opportunity to talk with my male friends about this project, they've engaged me with a look that says, "He could be losing it." So why did I write this book? Here's the answer: because women strongly encouraged me to do so. Believe me, this book would have never found its way into print if a chorus of feminine voices had not urged me to go forward and do it.

Of course, there's a story that goes with that. For nearly two decades I have enjoyed a wonderfully fulfilling ministry called Men's Fraternity. I started this with thirty men who met with me weekly to explore core issues and concerns men deal with every day in their hearts and lives. It is real-life stuff men quickly connect with. God obviously blessed it, because soon more than a thousand men were joining me each week for this journey. Best of all, I saw significant levels of positive and powerful change in the lives of many of the men who participated—so much so that their girlfriends or wives began to buzz about the good things they were observing in their men. Many of these women actually began to listen to tapes of my weekly Men's Fraternity presentations. No doubt they were curious as to what was really going on. Evidently they liked what they heard, because it wasn't long until I was approached by some of the women leaders in our church with the idea of doing something similar with the women. For several years I only laughed and said, "No way. I'm not a woman."

Then four years ago I was approached again with a more limited invitation: would I address key biblical principles for helping women better construct and manage their lives in a way that honors God and avoids unnecessary sorrows in the whirl of the modern world? To me, that felt much more appropriate and doable. It was within the scope of my competency, so I agreed to do it.

I gave my first set of "New Eve" lectures to some three hundred women in Little Rock in 2004. Then, a short time later, I did it again before six hundred women in Rockford, Illinois, just outside Chicago. Both groups gave me very positive feedback. In fact, a number of the women who attended these sessions have since gone on and used the CDs and DVDs that were produced from these conferences to conduct New Eve study and discussion groups of their own. Meanwhile, many women began to ask me if I would consider redrafting this material into a book. After a time of weighing the risks and seeking God's direction on this possibility, I decided to move forward.

So here we are.

My sincere hope is that in reading this book, you will find the same kind of eye-opening encouragement other women have told me they've received through hearing my New Eve talks. Let me assure you that what you find here will not be a one-size-fits-all, cookie-cutter approach to womanhood supported by Bible verses. This is not

about becoming a biblical Barbie or recapturing a 1950s model of womanhood; nor is it about promising a formula for a trouble-free life. Life can get messy even when you make the right choices, as many of you know. Thus, my approach is simply to offer hands-on, proven guidelines for making your unique life better, richer, and more meaningful. I've seen the benefit of these guidelines in the lives of my adult daughters as they have navigated the highs and lows of their professional careers and personal lives.

Therefore, I have built the New Eve around five big-picture faith strategies. I call these strategies *bold moves* because living them out requires bold faith. They serve as guardrails for a woman's life, not only protecting her from harm but also leading her to a more satisfying, purposeful, and God-honoring lifestyle. But courageous faith is required to embrace them.

Finally, let me say a word about the title, *The New Eve*. You're probably wondering why I chose that title. I did so for two reasons. First, the Eve story in Genesis is a gold mine of helpful feminine insight, extremely useful in constructing a lifestyle that works for today's modern woman. Second, Eve is much more than merely the first woman. She powerfully represents a *type* of woman. Amid the immense freedoms and opportunities of the garden God had placed her in, Eve made bad choices that squandered her potential and unleashed a painful life of regret.

The term *New Eve* therefore becomes a metaphor for a second type of woman who counters the first Eve. She is a woman of keen discernment. She is a woman who has learned how to navigate our modern world and its endless opportunities—some of which are forbidden fruit—and make right choices. That's because she is a woman whose biblical convictions run deep. And her choices bring her precisely the opposite of what the first Eve experienced. Rather than pain and regret, the New Eve finds that her bold moves have unleashed a growing sense of satisfaction and freedom into her life.

Every woman is an Eve. You'll see that clearly in the pages ahead. All that's really in question is: Which type of Eve will you be? Will your life look more like the foolish original or the new one who makes better choices? I truly believe the five bold moves I set forth here can go a long way in helping you find the more rewarding path.

If at this point I have stirred your interest and answered your questions, then let me encourage you to join me on this New Eve journey.

1

I Am Woman

Anita woke up at 6:00 a.m. Normally she would lie in bed and think, pray, and plan until Ron awoke, but not today. For weeks, *months*, this day had crowded everything else out of her mind. But enough with thinking. It was time to move.

After a quick shower she dressed and headed for the kitchen. She paused to peek inside her children's rooms. Empty. A sense of loss streaked across her heart. When the kids were young, she had negotiated a part-time employment arrangement with her boss in order to be with them. Motherhood then had been about monsters under the bed, scraped knees, Big Wheels, bedtime stories, and the never-ending question: "Why, Mommy?" Later it became endless carpools, schoolwork, athletic events, and volatile boy-girl relationships. Anita had been there for it all, having put a great career track on hold to be at home. She'd do it all again in a heartbeat. There were no regrets except that this time had passed. The kids were in college now, and she had reengaged her career full time five years ago.

As Anita set the coffeemaker in motion, the business of the day rushed back upon her. She smiled at the tension in her stomach, then turned on the TV at the breakfast bar to catch news about her sister. Select polls had been open for more than an hour now; newscasters were poring over anemic streams of data, somehow converting them into "scientific" predictions on how the day would unfold. "Joanna Taylor is sure to win the Senate seat," said one pollster. "No, no, this thing is still up for grabs," countered another. Anita tried not to listen, but she couldn't think of not listening. "Go, Sis, go!" she breathed.

"How's she doing?" Ron asked as he came into the kitchen.

"Far too early to say," Anita replied. "It's silly of me to be watching."

"Not at all," Ron said as he drew up next to her and gave a reassuring hug.

"I've got to get going," Anita said, quickly refocusing on the day's big events. "I'll swing by the poll and vote, *several times* if I can," she laughed. "Then I'm meeting Sandy at 10:00 for a final walk-through of the merger contract before I report for jury duty."

Ron shook his head in admiration. "You're something, you know that? Today your sister's set to become a U.S. senator, you're closing one of the biggest deals your company has ever made, and still you don't bother to ask for exemption from jury duty. What else can you fit into this day? Hey, the driveway needs resealing," he suggested with a wry smile.

Anita laughed as she finished off a muffin. "Mostly I just want Sis to get that Senate seat! The other stuff is secondary."

"Just be home in time for us to enjoy this night together, OK?" Ron said.

“You got it,” Anita answered firmly. Then, with a sigh of reflection, she paused and said, “Ron, think about what this day means.” A photograph, framed in red, sat atop the counter in front of her. She turned it so Ron could see. It was Anita's great-grandmother. “Grandma Parry never saw a day like this. She was smart and ambitious, but she never set foot in a college. She never held a job that paid real money either, let alone run for an elected office. Yet in many ways all the opportunities that are given to Sis and me are owed to her and others like her. That two big moments for Sis and me happen to fall on the same day is perhaps God's special way of reminding us of how privileged we are.”

Ron nodded. “Well, by tonight I'll have a senator in the family and a savvy businesswoman who knows her way around a jury box. Great day to be a Parry woman!”

“A great day to be a *woman*,” Anita corrected him. She righted the picture frame, blew Ron a kiss, and stepped out into a world of opportunity that her great-grandmother could never have imagined.

Unlimited Opportunity

It is a great day to be a woman. The opportunities now available to you and women everywhere in the twenty-first century are astounding. You have more power—personally, professionally, and politically—than at any other time in human history. And that power trajectory is predicted to rise even further in the decades to come. “Women will rock,” predicts Ron Fournier, author of *Applebee's America*. Today they “are getting better grades, running a majority of student governments, and graduating from college in larger numbers than their male counterparts.” In the future “the best and the brightest will be women.”¹

Celinda Lake and Kellyanne Conway foresee an even bolder outlook for women through their research. They write, “Without fanfare, almost stealthily, America has become women-centric... . Women—from seniors to boomers to Generations X and Y—are recasting the nation in their image” and “shaking the culture to its core.”²

These statements are especially breathtaking when one remembers how far women have come in such a very short time. Fewer than one hundred years ago, *you couldn't even vote as a woman!* Opportunities, as compared to men's, were extremely limited. For the most part, a woman's world was defined primarily by husband and home.

But then new winds began to blow. Changes in the law expanded a woman's horizons. Women won the right to vote (by *one vote*) in 1920 and with it gained a new voice and powerful influence in shaping society. Growing educational opportunities opened up a woman's mind to new possibilities. The advent of World War II gave thousands of women new experiences. Many discovered they could do “a man's job” by working in factories and running assembly lines, building and flying airplanes, managing businesses, and constructing the war machine their men unleashed half a world away.

After the war, technology opened up a woman's time. Chores that once took hours were now finished with the touch of a button. A woman's schedule was now freer than

ever before for “something more.” But what?

Finally, the feminist movement of the '70s and '80s opened up a woman's fighting spirit. She no longer had to stay quiet, stay at home, or stay married. Where society refused to change to accommodate her, she herself confronted and fought to change it. “I am woman, hear me roar!” Helen Reddy sang as newly liberated women broke into male-dominated domains, overturned rigid social structures, and took new ground for their ever-growing ambitions. Today that “roar” is louder than ever.

Now in the twenty-first century, women like you have more rights, choices, and freedoms than ever before. In many areas, women have not only achieved equality with men but have also *surpassed* their male counterparts. For example:

Workforce. Half of the American workforce is female. From 1976 to 1999 the percentage of American women who were working soared from 57 percent to 77 percent.³

Equal Pay ... Greater Pay. A third of working wives outearn their working husbands.⁴ This percentage is expected to rise significantly in the next decade.

Business Ownership. Nearly half of all American businesses are at least 50 percent owned by women. These firms, small and large, employ 19.1 million people and generate \$2.5 trillion in annual revenue.⁵

Business Management. By 2001 women held close to 50 percent of all high-paying managerial, executive, and administrative jobs. As of 2004, 15 percent of Fortune 500 companies had a female CEO, a 20 percent increase since 2002. Top companies are increasingly topped by women!⁶

Church Involvement and Lay Leadership. After a nationwide survey, George Barna concluded that “women shoulder most of the responsibility for the health and vitality of the Christian faith in the United States.”⁷

Education. From kindergarten to graduate school, females are achieving far more than males; so much so that one leading publication says males are now the “second sex.”⁸

College Enrollment. Women outnumber men by 30 percent in American colleges. That adds up to two million more women attending college than men. That's a stunning turnaround from the 1960s, when 66 percent of college students were men. Furthermore, female students are 33 percent more likely to graduate than their male counterparts.⁹ The *New York Times* summed it up this way in a front-page headline: “At Colleges, Women Are Leaving Men in the Dust.” The *Times* went on to say, “Academically, boys are about where they were 30 years ago, but girls are just on a tear, doing much, much better.”¹⁰

Bachelor's Degrees. In fields of study ranging from biology to business, history to social science, and psychology to education, women are earning the majority of bachelor's degrees.¹¹ How many more? At least 200,000 more bachelor's degrees are awarded to women than men, according to the National Center of Education Statistics.¹²

Master's Degrees. Women now earn more than 50 percent of all master's

degrees.¹³

MBA Enrollment. Women now compose 35 percent of all students in MBA programs.¹⁴ In some business schools that percentage is much higher. For instance, at the Whittemore School of Business, one of the top one hundred graduate business schools in the nation, 61 percent of its full-time students are now women. That's up from 29 percent in 2004.¹⁵

Medical School. By 2003–2004 females composed 48 percent of all medical students, up from only 6 percent in 1960.¹⁶ This percentage is expected to grow.

Law School. Women make up 50 percent of all new law students.¹⁷

All of these statistics are revealing, but the ones concerning education are especially telling because education is the best predictor of future demographics. As U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings says, the predominance of women on college campuses “has profound implications for the economy, society, families, and democracy.”¹⁸ All indications are that women will gain a clear majority in most professional fields as the twenty-first century progresses. As this enormous social realignment continues to play out, men will increasingly find themselves working for and tailoring their lives to women rather than vice versa. Whether men and women will adapt well to this new arrangement remains to be seen, but it is coming. The spotlight is clearly on the rising power of women.

A Warning from History

While it's true that freedom, power, and opportunity are wonderful assets to a woman's portfolio, there is a dark side. History illustrates this by pointing us back to other occasions when women had far-reaching rights and freedoms at their fingertips. In his book *Caesar and Christ*, Will Durant detailed one prime example of this from the first two centuries AD, when women in the major urban centers of the Roman Empire experienced their own season of liberation. Indeed, the parallels to our present day make Rome feel like America's historical twin.

That's because Roman women of this era had also acquired new and expanded freedoms that went well beyond the traditional boundaries. Long held back by law and custom, they won unprecedented rights for themselves and a level playing field with men. With this new power, they became doctors and lawyers, owned property, and traded goods. They enjoyed the liberty of conducting business with men in private quarters. This new tang of freedom was exhilarating, dizzying, and seductive.

Wisdom and restraint soon became the enemies of this newfound freedom rather than guardrails for it. Excess and foolishness disguised as chic became the new virtues. Women threw off modesty and walked the streets wearing however little they liked. Adulteries increased so much as to deaden the sense of scandal. Divorce was common; open marriage more so. Men preferred concubines to wives, and wives sought lovers in full view of their husbands. Abortion became a mundane means of birth control. Women lobbied for and eventually won the right to fight alongside men in military combat roles. Classic femininity became decidedly out of vogue in the new Rome. With this new femininity and the shift from an agrarian to a cosmopolitan

social structure, women pursued new, more aggressive roles in society and, along with their husbands, gave less and less attention to their homes.

Does any of this sound familiar?

Predictably, family problems exploded and birthrates fell sharply. Childbearing interrupted opportunity and the pursuit of beauty, so women avoided it like the plague. Caesar Augustus was so alarmed at these developments that he moved to bolster the image of motherhood in Rome by according mothers special honor in public. He dressed them in fine robes, exempted them from taxes, seated them in the luxury boxes at the Colosseum, and in earnest bid the nation do homage to the institute of motherhood. But his bid failed. The new Roman woman simply wasn't interested.¹⁹

In a final reflection on Rome's gender revolution, Durant noted that these women in their liberty chose more often than not to emulate men's vices rather than their virtues. Perhaps more to the point, Roman women took their new equality with men as an opportunity to become virtually indistinguishable from the men they once chafed under and disdained.²⁰ Some feminists of our own era have noted this same tendency among modern women. French activist Simone de Beauvoir, for instance, concluded, "It's quite obvious that once they are in power, women are exactly like men."²¹

I believe the freedoms and opportunities women like yourself have gained in this past century are wonderful assets. Everything is in place for you to excel. However, history shows that the freedom to excel also brings with it the freedom to bind yourself to greater evils and new sorrows.

What's a Woman to Choose?

Freedom always comes with forbidden fruit.

Many modern women already know this reality firsthand. Many others—maybe you—are starting to feel the tension that comes with unlimited freedom and opportunity. Gone are the days where there was one prescribed path for women to follow. Now there are endless options and lifestyles from which to choose—some good, some bad, some disastrous, but each promising the same thing on the front end: *life*.

So how do you discover what's best for you? Where is the help that can cut through the fog (especially for young women) to help you decide how to live smart and well? Unfortunately today there is a lack of "life coaching" (the kind mentioned in Titus 2) that offers trustworthy navigational guidelines to assist women in discerning which choices are best and which, however alluring, might be empty promises or tragic dead ends. All of this leaves women asking, "How do I know on the front end which choices deliver the most out of life? And how do I avoid major mistakes and lifelong disappointments?" Such are the questions constantly circling around today's woman.

What adds additional anxiety is knowing that any choice you make *for* something is also a choice to *miss out* on something else. As Caitlin Flanagan said, "The unpleasant truth [is] that life presents a series of choices, each of which precludes a host of other attractive possibilities."²² Without some kind of assurance, the haunting

questions within each life choice are these: “Did I do the right thing? Was this the best for me, or did I miss the best?”

Looking back on their lives, many women wonder, *What was I thinking?* For instance, choosing to participate in the sexual revolution seemed liberating to many women years ago. But now that the kids have come and many dads have gone (nearly 40 percent of all children growing up today are fatherless; 50 percent of children born to mothers ages eighteen to twenty-four are without dads) and now that STDs and AIDS have come and stayed, how liberating was it? What about the hidden abortion or the sexual flashbacks? Liberating or enslaving? Is this the direction you want to offer your daughter or a younger woman as the way to a fulfilling life? Surely not. And yet everywhere—in movies, in music, and public role models—this forbidden fruit is still being advocated and glamorized as part of a new and improved womanhood. Many of today's young women are quick to take the bite.

Recently, a major advertising agency polled five hundred men and five hundred women, asking them at what point in a relationship they thought it was OK to have sex. The majority of men said on the fourth or fifth date. The women said between the first and second.²³

Many women also continue to buy into one of the oldest pickup lines in the book: “You can have it all!” Like their great-ancestor Eve, they embrace this forbidden idea (Gen. 3:3–4) with passion, believing they can have everything without missing anything. They soon discover that this seductive promise is nothing more than the big, painful lie it has always been. This is especially true in the very sensitive subject of children and career. Can you have both? Of course. Can you do both well? That depends on a host of factors—your use of wisdom and an honest accounting of your limitations being chief among them. But you can't have it all in the absolute sense. Something or someone always gets left out or deeply hurt when you try.

Maria Shriver, a celebrated TV commentator and the wife of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, has learned this hard truth. In her book *Ten Things I Wish I'd Known—Before I Went Out into the Real World*, she offers the following advice: “You can't have an exciting, successful, powerful career and at the same time win the mother-of-the-year award and be wife and lover extraordinaire. No one can. If you see successful, glamorous women on magazine covers proclaiming they do it all, believe me, you're not getting the whole story.” She then admitted, “Once you have children, you not only can't do it all, you can't do it the same way you were doing it before. In other words, once you start a family, don't expect to be the same hard-driving, workaholic, do-anything, go-anywhere worker you were. Because if you are, your children will suffer.”²⁴

Meredith Vieira, a former host of *The View* and now a coanchor of NBC's *Today* show, gave an insightful interview to *Time* magazine's Jeff Chu. Chu asked, “You quit *60 Minutes* to focus on your family, but you now seem to juggle motherhood and work well. What do you say to women who want to have it all?” Vieira replied, “I hate that expression. When I left *60 Minutes*, I had women who came up to me very angry and said, ‘You know, you were proof you could have it all. How dare you leave?’ I thought that was ridiculous—I would lie to myself to create a lie for everybody else? You have

to prioritize. If you can fit in job and kids and be comfortable with it, great. At that point, I realized I couldn't do it and give my kids and husband what they needed.”²⁵

My question is, Who's teaching young women that they can't have it all? The truth is, virtually no one. And when someone like Shriver or Vieira ventures out to admit that having it all is a myth, she is usually skewered and quickly dispensed with by so-called progressives who hold that “having it all” is the Holy Grail for women.

Of course, you can escape this difficult balancing act by simply eliminating children from the equation altogether. Young women are increasingly choosing this option as they see female icons like Oprah and Rachael Ray lead by example. In an interview with *Good Housekeeping* magazine, Ray, the megastar of Food Network, admitted that the demands on her time meant that motherhood would not likely find a spot on her calendar anytime soon. Said Ray, “Now I'm in my late 30's, and I've committed to so much work in the next three years that I think it would be really selfish to attempt to have a child.”²⁶

Selfish to have a child? Or could it be that this new womanhood is so “into self” that there is no room for loving children? This me-first attitude is part of the new fruit offered to young, modern Eves. It is glamorous and appealing. But before reaching for this fruit, you would do well to heed the words of Sylvia Ann Hewlett. When she set out to interview scores of highly successful women who were well into their careers, she assumed she would hear stories of celebrity status, power, and money that made children an easy trade-off. But “this is *not* what these women said. Rather, they told haunting stories of children being crowded out of their lives by high-maintenance careers and needy partners... . I was taken aback by what I heard. Going into these interviews I had assumed that if these accomplished, powerful women were childless, surely they had chosen to be. I was absolutely prepared to understand that the exhilaration and challenge of a megawatt career made it easy to decide not to be a mother. Nothing could be further from the truth. When I talked to these women about children, their sense of loss was palpable. I could see it in their faces, hear it in their voices, and sense it in their words.”²⁷

There you have it. Some of America's most successful women confess that the thrill of climbing to the top is not so fulfilling when they leave behind some of their greatest feminine callings to get there. But it will take much more than an occasional confessional from successful businesswomen to correct the course many women are on today. What is needed is a multitude of wise mentors. Some women are already doing this, but we need more.

I believe younger women would love for older, life-smart women to step forward and courageously speak into the confusion and empty rhetoric of much of today's modern femininity and offer rock-solid ways to build a life. They yearn for the life coaches I mentioned earlier—women who can point them to a life that is not only sensible and satisfying (Titus 2:5) but one that can go the distance without pulling up somewhere lame with regret. So where are the voices of this wisdom?

The truth is, when younger women look to their older contemporaries, they get more questions than answers. News anchor Alison Stewart illustrates the surprise and even disappointment many young women feel when they see deep tensions in older