



THE UNIQUE WOMAN

INSIGHT & WISDOM TO MAXIMIZE YOUR LIFE

EDWIN LOUIS COLE
AND
NANCY CORBETT COLE



RESOLUTE BOOKS

Southlake, Texas

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Insight & Wisdom to Maximize Your Life**

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DEDICATION

TO OUR MOTHERS

To the courageous women who helped
shape our lives—

Florence Goodrum Cole
Alice Miriam Corbett

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PREFACE

At the outset of this book, let me tell you about the author, Nancy, my wife of more than fifty years before she left me for another Man—the Man Christ Jesus.

Nancy was the embodiment of the word “grace.” Known around the world as “The Loveliest Lady in the Land,” she was loved by those who knew her, and she loved those she knew. She was courageous, firm, loving, gentle, beautiful and the most godly person I ever knew in my lifetime.

The following pages contain the pattern of what made her “unique” and are the only place where she revealed in words her beliefs about true femininity and womanhood, at every stage of a woman’s life.

Through the years of our marriage, I grew to love her in a way I never dreamed was possible. Her prayer life, forgiving spirit, consistent application of truth, never-ending compassion and humor were a constant source of strength to me and to her entire family.

These pages contain a priceless legacy from a life lived in intimate friendship with God and man, giving you the principles, truths, insights and revelations that guided, sustained and kept her. They were learned at a great price, but shared with you freely. Learn them to avoid the cost of the lessons.

Throughout my life, I have had the opportunity to meet, study under, work with and befriend some of the world’s finest people. For each and every one who has

profoundly influenced my life, I thank God. However, without any doubt, my wife was the single greatest influence on my life.

Nancy's life was lived with a passion to introduce people to Jesus Christ. Through her writings, you may come to know and love her and learn to love the Lord of her life more than ever. She would want it that way.

—Edwin Louis Cole

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

To our daughter, Joann Webster,
for her hard work, for the hours she expended
writing, researching—painstakingly
pulling the manuscript together. We couldn't
have done it without her.

INTRODUCTION

Since World War II, society's image of woman has shifted as quickly as the fashion trends. The ideal touted in one season becomes outmoded the next. One season women's groups and the world's media are promoting a "feminist movement," then a few years later, the movement is being called an "unfortunate, embarrassing relic of the Sixties."

One year "Supermom" is lauded, and the next she is abased. A New York management consultant says, "Marketers are (now) treating women as if they were—I don't know how else to say it—as if they were regular people."¹

Each image and ideal, portrayed as the new, improved version (like packaged products), somehow is beyond the grasp of "regular people." And each successive "ideal" proves to be as confining and constricting to women as those of the past.

Many women embark on a search for the "real me" only to be deceived or frustrated as they attempt to become whatever is the present-day image of woman. Outwardly conforming, yet inwardly rebelling, they one day discover that, deep inside, they are not the person they have accidentally become.

Others are afraid to admit what they really desire to become. They hesitate to talk about what they believe is

their real potential. Repression seems easier to deal with than rejection.

Some women have learned to seek and receive roses, dinners and diamonds—yet they never have the stability, security, satisfaction of identity or real love they truly desire.

A great number of women have given their lives over to men, wanting to live through husbands and boyfriends—only to be disappointed in the men and, as a result, in themselves.

Many, many wives desperately want their husbands to change, mature, accept responsibility and be the men they were created to be. They realize belatedly that the only truly liberated married woman is married to a “maximized” man.

Single women want to find “Mr. Right.” Most of them do not realize they will not find “right” men while looking in the “wrong” places.

Ours is a world of disposable diapers, disposable razors and disposable women. Women are deserted and discarded every day. Convenience outweighs commitment.

Disappointed and dissatisfied, women seek legislation to cause society to change. They verbally demand for people to change. And, inwardly, they long for their personal lives to change.

What is the standard of measure to determine the changes that need to be made?

Who are the people who must do the changing?

And who will enforce the changes?

Where is there justice and power?

There is only one true standard, one great authority, one perfect justice, one source of power that is able to withstand and outlast the tests of time, pressures of society, ever-changing authorities and fluctuations in the world. That authority and power is found in Jesus Christ—Savior of all, Lord of Life—and in His eternal truth.

True womanhood can never be measured by a man’s affections or society’s praises but by a woman’s own character as measured by the Word of God.

There is no other standard.

We attempt, in these next pages, to pass on to you some of God's truths, principles and patterns to help you attain a higher goal, achieve a better life and enjoy richer relationships.

This is not an exhaustive commentary on womanhood. Nor is it a concordance of advice, one of the thousands of "self-help" books or a formula for success. This book simply contains some of the truths we have learned from our life together during many years of marriage and ministry.

So, relax and read.

Then apply and enjoy.

Truth is like soap—it won't do you any good if it is not applied.

—Edwin and Nancy Cole

CHAPTER ONE

THE UNIQUENESS OF THE WOMAN

EDWIN

For years, I have traveled throughout the world speaking mostly in “men only” meetings. At one conference where I was a guest speaker, the audience was both men and women, and the woman who introduced me saw her opportunity to jibe me humorously about my ministry to men. Her story was:

“God created light and said, ‘I can do better,’ so He made the worlds. Then He said, ‘I can do better,’ so He made the animals. He saw the animals and said again, ‘I can do better,’ so He made man. God saw all He had made and still said, ‘I can do better,’ so He made woman. Then God rested because He could do no better.” We all laughed, but she made her point.

Women are a unique creation of God. Both men and women have a God-given uniqueness, and each is a complement to the other. However, many women have had that uniqueness damaged, changed or perverted in some way and have been robbed, hurt and limited in their womanhood.

For years, women have pressured me to allow them to attend the meetings I have conducted. The meetings are for “men only” simply because a man will respond differently when there are no women present. But the demand from the women became so great, one year I added meetings for “women only” to our schedule. Nancy conducted them, and I spoke and ministered. Literally thousands of women from many backgrounds, cultures, races and persuasions attended meetings held around the world.

Before we began that year of ministry, neither Nancy nor I realized the immensity of the problems, the hurt and the mental, moral, physical and actual trauma done to a woman’s sense of uniqueness. It was incredibly rewarding to see the hundreds, truthfully thousands, of women who were helped, changed, and had that blessed sense of uniqueness restored to them during our meetings for “women only.”

In America, every fifteen seconds, a woman is beaten.¹ In 1986, a woman was a victim of rape or attempted rape every three and a half minutes. Seventy-seven percent of the victims of violent crimes committed by relatives are women.² One out of every four women has been molested. Add to that emotional deprivation, mental abuse, physical neglect and other practices which are rarely reported.

Nancy and I found a wide disparity between women which often stemmed directly from their childhood. Women who had developed a poor self-image from their father’s deprecation, abuse or neglect; a mother’s dominance; sibling rivalry or animosity; or other assorted familial bruising, were robbed of their sense of uniqueness and developed abnormal behavior patterns or impaired relationships which lasted until the Lord Jesus Christ renewed them in their uniqueness.

When a woman’s uniqueness is plundered, pillaged or ravaged, it can do almost irreparable damage to her and those around her. Women survive but carry the pain, resentment, bitterness and sense of loss with them all through life. Some are emotionally scarred, are mentally

disturbed, live with suicidal tendencies or are alienated from society. Most, however, learn to suppress and repress the experiences with the memories and hurt but never enjoy the true freedom of being uniquely a woman.

Psychological help has been a source of relief to help relinquish regret or remorse or ameliorate the suffering. But God has given a way for full restoration of that uniqueness.

A lady once asked me to tell men to send their wives birthday and anniversary cards. She was serious in her request, and I understood why. She wanted to feel unique, to have things that mattered to her be treated with deference and dignity and to know that her husband thought of her as special—therefore honoring her on special occasions.

Everyone, single or married, man or woman, has a recognition hunger that needs to be fed, a thirst for affection that needs to be quenched, a desire for attention that seeks satisfaction.

In speaking to a crowd, when I tell the scenario about a man and woman taking a drive, the story never ceases to elicit a laugh.

He sits behind the wheel of the car which is stopped at a red traffic light. The car is idling and so is he. She sits on her side in quiet contemplation. Suddenly she speaks, “Do you love me?”

To him, her comment is totally irrelevant to the moment. It is extraneous to everything they are engaged in, detached from everything he is thinking and socially inappropriate. So with casual, preoccupied nonchalance, he mutters, “Yeah.”

The answer is insufficient to her need, so she asks again, “Do you love me?”

Perturbed, he shoots a look at her and offhandedly says, “I said I did!”

“That isn’t what I asked,” she says. With a change from soft-spirited hunger to insistent desire, she demands, “I said, ‘Do you love me?’”

Putting the car in gear and starting hastily as the light changes to green, he says loudly, “Yes, I said, ‘I love you’—OK?”

Sitting straight up in her seat, she says even louder, “All I asked was if you love me, and you start shouting!”

He never answers a word, and for the next twenty minutes, there is a tense silence between them. Finally, he can stand it no longer. He turns to her contritely and says, “Honey, I’m sorry I acted the way I did. Forgive me. I guess the devil just got in there.”

The devil didn’t have anything to do with it! He was just dumb! All she wanted was a little affection, some personal recognition. She had a desire to have her sense of uniqueness satisfied by personal attention and affection.

If you are a married man reading this book, let me give you a piece of advice. The next time your wife whispers, “Do you love me?” turn to her and say, “Is the sky blue, is water wet, are mountains high? That’s how much I love you!” Watch what happens when you give her a loaf of attention instead of tossing her a few crumbs.

Every woman needs love and worth to satisfy her sense of uniqueness. When her worth is only in her body and not in her as a person, tragedy can strike. Hollywood has a graveyard full of stories of such women. Single women know it all too well. Feelings of worthlessness can overwhelm.

While speaking to a group of ministers in Dallas, I told them of the problems ministers’ wives suffer. Talking about every person’s need for love and worth, I mentioned that many ministers do not understand why their wives are depressed and resent the ministry, them or the congregation.

More often than not, church board members hire a minister, give him a salary, then expect his wife to work in the church as much as the minister. He gets paid, she receives nothing, except maybe an occasional gesture of appreciation that doesn’t show her true worth to the church.

Women in the congregation expect her to be at every function, lead women’s groups, be attractively coiffed and

attired, have her children always dressed perfectly, be a most loving support to her husband and always compliant to the church members' wishes.

Little love, even less worth, makes an unhappy woman.

Looking at those ministers point blank, I told them, "When you don't show your wife love and make ways for the congregation to do it, and when you make her a non-paid volunteer who works as hard as your paid associates, you are looking for trouble.

"Ministers' wives," I continued, "who work in the church alongside their husbands need to feel they are valuable also. Compensate them! Give them a sense of value. Communicate it with gesture, not just with words!"

Two ministers told me later the message changed their marriages. They had never understood their wives' attitudes toward the ministry until then. They never understood before that their own uniqueness was being satisfied by the church, but their wives' uniqueness was not being satisfied at all.

Life must have value or it is worthless!

A biblical understanding of men and women reveals that each derives satisfaction from different sources. Men were created in Adam who was given stewardship over the earth to guide, guard and govern and to oversee the reproduction process on earth by which everything would be replenished after its kind.³ To this day, a man's uniqueness is basically satisfied in relationship to his job, and his fulfillment comes from the reproduction process involved in it.

The farmer's greatest fulfillment is not in tilling the soil, sowing the seed or watering it, but in the harvest—the reproduction. A salesman's greatest fulfillment is in a satisfied customer. A preacher may begin to grow weary in well doing, but the fulfillment of his ministry rejuvenates him through the reproduction process when a person receives the message and is born of the Spirit of God.

Jesus Himself, when He was wearied with His journey, sat by a well and began conversing with a woman while the disciples went for food. The end result was that He was able to reveal Himself as the Messiah to her, and she believed Him. When the disciples returned, He told them He had *“meat to eat that ye know not of.”*⁴ He was replenished in energy by the reproduction process of imparting His revelation and eternal life to her.

Adam had charge of the garden and he loved God, but God has no peer. Therefore, Adam was “alone,” because he had no peer. For love to exist, there must be an object to love. God created woman to be Adam’s peer, the object of his love. She was created as a “help meet”⁵ or “completer.” By creation, she was made to be the completion of the man in God.

God invested Himself in Adam in creation. He breathed into Adam, and Adam became a living soul.⁶ He put the kingdom of God in Adam, and Adam in the kingdom of God when He placed him in Eden. The characteristics of Adam emanated from the character of God which was inbreathed into him in creation. Adam had the nature of God implanted in him—both the masculine and feminine, tender and tough, disciplinarian and nurturer.

When God created the woman, He took a rib from Adam to make her. The rib was symbolic of something taken from Adam and placed in Eve. If God had created the woman from anything other than that which was already in Adam, He would have created the woman inferior to the man. But God never created any woman to be inferior to any man! Woman was made from man in the beginning, but ever since then, man has come from woman. With this, God shows the equality of men and women.

God took the feminine, the nurturing, the tenderness of His own nature, already inbreathed into Adam, and gave the woman those strengths—leaving the man with the masculine, the disciplinarian, the tough.

Each was and is a God-given strength.

Both man and woman have strengths the world, and each other, needs.

When God created the man, He called him Adam. After He created the woman and brought them into the union of marriage, God called them Adam.⁷ She is the complement to the man, and together they make “one” or a “whole.”

The man’s greatest fulfillment is in the reproduction process, and so is the woman’s. A man’s uniqueness is basically satisfied in relationship to his job, but a woman’s uniqueness is basically satisfied in relationship to a man. A single woman does not have to marry to be “completed,” but there is a uniqueness in her that would be satisfied at marriage.

When you begin to understand how God originally created men and women, you begin to comprehend why there are so many difficulties in their relationships.

One problem with marriage is that men and women generally do not recognize or appreciate each other’s individuality or uniqueness. They each dream of their ideal then marry the real. The difference between the real and ideal is the degree of disappointment the person feels in the marriage. *Disappointments are not based on what you find but on what you expect to find.*

In dealing with men, I find that many of them do not understand the life principle which requires a man to minister to a woman to make her feel unique to him. They may accidentally do it from time to time, but because they don’t understand the principle, they don’t make a habit of it.

Courtship is the classic example of this truth.

During courtship, a man generally works hard to convince the lady of his choice that he desires her and her only. She is his exclusive choice to make his life complete. When she is finally convinced, completely sure, she will then agree to marry him.

After marriage, though, he may no longer maintain that attitude, nor attempt to satisfy her uniqueness. Then he wonders why she no longer submits or acts like the woman

she “used to be.” It is because he no longer seeks to satisfy her sense of uniqueness and simply takes her for granted.

His change begets her change.

The great danger in marriage is when either the husband or the wife begins to demand satisfaction from the other. He cannot demand her submission any more than she can demand his affection. Both must be voluntarily given. Where love is missing, so also are submission and affection.

Today’s society puts a heavy burden on both men and women. *Men feel the pressure to perform; women feel the pressure to conform.*

The pressure on a woman to conform comes from every force in society. Her husband may pressure her to conform to his “ideal” of a wife. Consciously or subconsciously, she also feels the pressure from her children, parents and friends to conform to their images of her. In addition, modern media manipulators (called “advertisers”) impose their concepts of womanliness with unrelenting pressure—coldly and calculatingly tailoring the concepts in order to sell more of their product. They don’t appear to care about the stress in society they create.

It is no wonder women today appear confused, wounded and/or discouraged. Endeavoring to gratify others’ expectations frustrates a woman who desires to achieve her own goals in life, to satisfy her own hunger for personal identity or to gain the reward of fulfillment.

Resentment against those who will not accept her as she is will cause a latent hostility which manifests itself in irritability, anger or breakdown. It can be expressed by the cry, “Stop the world, I want to get off!”

God has an answer for that!

God’s answer is to please Him first and foremost. By pleasing God, a woman will be pleasing to others, including herself.

There is a rest in the eternal that frees us from the burden of the temporal.

The reason so many women in the Bible followed Jesus, loved Him and ministered to Him is because He so perfectly satisfied their need for uniqueness. He elevated them to the place God originally created them to be by treating them as peers and joint-heirs with Him of their Heavenly Father. He has never changed.

You are unique. God created you to be unique, and where it is impaired, He recreates that uniqueness in your life through Jesus Christ.

NANCY

It was 6 p.m. in Phoenix, Arizona. I glanced at my watch as I checked the ballroom in one of the leading hotels where Edwin and I had scheduled a meeting for women that evening.

I thought, *What woman can attend a meeting at 6:30 p.m. when she works or has to fix dinner, and on a school night, at that?*

But just a few minutes after six, the first women arrived, then more, until, finally, there were several hundred seated in every available chair, eagerly awaiting the ministry that would change some of their lives in ways that, only a few hours before, God alone knew could happen.

At nearly every one of our meetings, Edwin offered prayer at the end of his message for women who had been abused—sexually, physically or otherwise—and he gave the principle of forgiveness from the Bible.

He exhorted them to release out of their lives the resentment, disappointment, bitterness and unforgiveness they felt against the person who wronged them.

That night, again, as we prayed, we saw God do miraculous things in those women. One woman, in particular, stands out in my memory. She was more than 60 years old, tall, stately and graceful, but with a hint of sadness around her eyes and faint, bitter creases down the sides of her mouth.

After prayer, her face moist with fresh tears, she told us that she had been molested as a young girl. Until that

night, she had never told anyone. The pain and anguish of the molestation had never left her, she said, although she had managed to live a successful life with the memory carefully tucked away. That evening she publicly voiced her forgiveness for the offender and released the memory, hurt and bitterness of the sin out of her life. Finally, she was free! Her face glowed through the tears, her eyes bright with the love of God.

We returned to our hotel after the meeting, somewhat weary in body but refreshed in spirit. As I lay on my bed before going to sleep, I thought of the very few minutes it had taken God to heal this woman and of the many years she had spent hiding the pain from God as well as everyone else.

What I saw in those meetings were women who really did not know that God is concerned with every area of their lives—areas where they hurt so badly, where they found no relief, where the feelings ran so deeply but they could not share them even with their husbands, parents or anyone close to them.

Their feelings of self-esteem and worth were very low as a result. They asked themselves over and over, “Does God care? Does anyone care? Why should I even care? The knot in my stomach and the band around my emotions are always there! How do I get rid of them? Yes, I am a child of God, but where is the abundant life He promised me?” Finally, they came to an understanding and belief that God cares and will help them.

During a time of crisis in my own life, I asked, “God, when are You going to show Yourself strong on my behalf?”⁸

Well, God *is* faithful. He is a good God. The fact is that many times we are in such a mess, it takes months or even years to straighten us out to the point where He can bless us without our taking advantage of the blessing or misusing it.

I am always amazed and thankful when I see the tremendous power and love that come from the heart of God to restore wounded spirits, bind up the bruised and heal the

brokenhearted.⁹ Songwriter Charles Gabriel stood “amazed in the presence of Jesus.”¹⁰ I echo that phrase when I see people transformed before my eyes. I know that I am one of those transformed people myself.

God loves women! We are His unique creation! Each woman is created to be special. He is as concerned about you as He is about any other woman—or man.

The Bible says, “*You were there while I was being formed in utter seclusion! You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe.*”¹¹ God looked at you and said, “Nice work!” and He planned what you would do in your life. Whether or not you are doing it is not just a concern to you but to Him.

The passage goes on to say, “*How precious it is, Lord, to realize that you are thinking about me constantly! I can’t even count how many times a day your thoughts turn towards me. And when I waken in the morning, you are still thinking of me!*”¹² We sometimes believe we need to be thinking about the Lord constantly to be truly “Christian.” If our mind wanders, we fear we may have fallen. But the fact is, *He* is thinking about *us* constantly. It is *His* faithfulness that we depend on, not our own.

Even when you first woke up this morning, God was already thinking of you. Hallelujah!

There is no reason why you cannot become all God created you to be. You can be as great as any biblical hero or heroine, but there are obstacles you will have to overcome just as they did. Also, the enemy of your soul—Satan—is real, and if he can convince you that God does not really love you, he can steal your uniqueness as well.

But, if you can become convinced in your heart that God loves you, nothing can stop you from achieving His purposes for your life.

The night of the Phoenix meeting, my faith wavered as I waited for the women to arrive. But what really impressed me is that the women *came*, never minding the inconvenience of the hour or the night, seeking something from the

Lord. I was struck by the purity of purpose they exhibited in seeking God and by a woman who had waited a lifetime for help that had been so readily available to her all along. How many others are there like that?

Never in my wildest dreams did I ever think I would be writing all these thoughts in a book! After many years as a businessman's wife, then a pastor's wife (same man!), as a mother, grandmother and career person—having proved God and found Him always faithful,¹³ always the same, never leaving me nor forsaking me¹⁴—when I was invited to help Edwin with this book, I felt I did have something to share out of a lifetime of experiences, and I wanted to share it with *you*.