Bob: When your teenage daughter is thinking to herself about what real womanhood / real femininity looks like, what comes to mind for her?

[Excerpt from Passport2Identity]

Girl: Beyoncé!

Girl-1: Beyoncé!

Girl-2: She commands a lot of respect in the world of celebrity. If I could be a woman just like her—she’s got it all!

Girl-3: I’d say for me whenever I think of like the perfect woman, I think of like Audrey Hepburn.

Girl-4: Audrey Hepburn.

Girl-5: Maybe, like Audrey Hepburn.

Girl-6: You can’t get any classier than Audrey Hepburn. I want her closet, I want her grace, and I want her shoes. [Laughter]

Girl-7: I would say the ultimate woman is Miss Arkansas.

Girl-8: Cleopatra.

Girl-9: Michelle Obama.

Girl-10: Michelle Obama.

Girl-11: Oprah.

Girl-12: J.K. Rowling, the author of Harry Potter.

Girl-13: Margaret Thatcher.
Girl-14: The ultimately woman is Margaret Thatcher.

Girl-15: I think Pocahontas.

Girl-16: Taylor Swift, maybe.

Girl-17: I have no clue.

Girl-18: I don’t know. [Laughter]

[Studio]

Bob: And welcome to FamilyLife Today. Thanks for joining us on the Tuesday edition.

Dennis: I’m just impressed that some of those young ladies knew who Audrey Hepburn was—seriously. [Laughter]

Bob: A lot of them did; didn’t they?!

Dennis: Yes, they did.

Bob: Pretty interesting—those were young women who were asked the question, “When you’re trying to get a picture of authentic womanhood and real femininity, who comes to mind?” We were doing this for a resource that has just been created, here at FamilyLife, called Passport2Identity.

Dennis: And Bob, I’ve just been thinking about this generation of young people—who are growing up in the teenage years / those who are between the ages of 14 and 16. We’ve got all kinds of new words that they are experiencing. We’ve got pocket-dialing, where you call a friend because you put your cell phone in your pocket and you accidentally dial them. But we also have something that is impacting teenagers called identity theft.

We have a major identity crisis with young people today. It’s part of why FamilyLife Today exists and why we created this resource. We want to help parents embed in their sons and their daughters what real masculinity and femininity looks like in their sons and daughters so, when they grow up, they’re going to know what a real woman is and what a real woman does—and the same for a young man.

Bob: Many of our listeners are familiar with the Passport2Purity® resource that was developed years ago to help parents with preteens address issues of peer pressure, and dating, and the birds and the bees—all of those kinds of issues. What we’ve heard from parents over the years is: “We wish we had more like that that we could do with our kids—where we could begin to probe some of these life issues that young people
are going through.” That’s why, for a couple of years now, we’ve been working on the Passport2Identity resource for 14-/15-year-old young people and their parents to get away for a couple of days and to address issues that junior high kids or middle school kids are grappling with: “What am I good at?” “What am I here for?” “What’s my purpose in life?” “How do I become popular?” “How do I get people to like me?” Those are the things that young people are dealing with.

And one of the issues they are dealing with, Dennis, is: “So, I’m a boy / I’m a girl. What does that mean for my identity that I’m masculine or feminine? What does it mean for my sexuality? What does it mean for my relationships with other people?”—a lot of confusion in that area.

Dennis: We want to help you, as a parent, equip your child to know: “What is a woman? What is a man?” And here on the broadcast with us are Michelle Hill and John Majors, who have developed both of these resources for parents. John, Michelle, welcome back.

Michelle: Thank you.

John: Thanks, Dennis.

Dennis: Michelle has worked at FamilyLife since 2005. She has been mentoring young ladies for the past 15 years. John has worked here since 2000. He and his wife Julie were married in 1999. They have three children, and he and Julie are on the Weekend to Remember® marriage getaway speaker team.

Let’s back up and talk about—Michelle, what is the essence of what the Bible teaches about true womanhood?

Michelle: Well, it is not what the world teaches—I can tell you that. As we really dug into the Bible and looked through it, we came up with four main characteristics. A biblical woman is going to have holy beauty, she’s going to have the heart of a helper, she is going to be a life-giver, and she’s going to have a heavenly focus.

Bob: What you’re saying is—that as you’re grappling with: “What are the issues that determine living as a woman according to God’s design, as opposed to what men need to focus on?”—young women need to focus on holy beauty. You’re talking about the beauty of their character, not the beauty of their—

Michelle: Exactly.

Bob: —their external beauty.

Michelle: Well, because that’s what we think. We think it is external beauty. We’re taught from the world that it is external beauty that makes us a woman.
Bob: You said the heart of a helper—and it’s not that men aren’t ever called to help—but there is a unique calling on women to be a helper, especially in the marriage relationship.

Michelle: Yes.

Bob: And then, you talk about a woman as a life-giver. Certainly, that’s true biologically if she becomes a wife and a mom; but a woman is a life-giver beyond just what she’s able to do biologically; right?

Michelle: Well, God created women uniquely in the fact that we like to nurture—we like to care for, and we like to see little people move to the next step / or even big people. Being in my mentoring relationships with young women, I like to see them move in their relationship with God in those “Aha!” moments. And I think—not that guys don’t have some nurturing abilities—I know you all have these abilities—but I think women have, maybe, 1 percent more or 2 percent more.

Bob: There is something about this nurturing quality in women that we just want to acknowledge and say: “It’s there, and it’s good. It’s a part of how God’s made you and you should respond to that.”

Dennis: I think when we start to discuss these kinds of topics, like nurturing and being a helper, there is a sense in which some people think that we’re demeaning women—not at all. This is a part of God’s design that He imprinted in a woman’s life, and it needs to be respected—just as a man’s does as well.

Bob: And we’re trying to present it to young women in such a way that it’s attractive, and it’s empowering, and it’s exciting, and they go: “Yes! I can respond to what’s in my heart, and that’s a good thing in how I respond to it.”

The final characteristic is a woman who has a—

Michelle: —a heavenly focus.

Bob: —a heavenly focus. She has—well, in the words of the theme verse for *Passport2Identity*: “She has set her mind on things that are above not on things that are on earth.” She recognizes that “You’re living life” for a bigger reason than just “to get to the end.”

John, you had to kind of come up with the same metric for what makes a young man different than a young woman. Tell us what you came up with.

John: Well, I had it easy—I mean, men are simple to begin with; right? [Laughter] But Dennis—he paved the way for us with the *Stepping Up* series. We just took from that.
There is a simple definition with the word, step—using that acronym—“S” / Standing firm—men will stand firm in hard times; “T” / Take the initiative; “E” / Engage with wisdom and grace—so, you'll engage into a situation, but you do it in a way that honors others / it doesn't just tear them down—not a bully. And then, “P” / Plan ahead and provide. The whole Stu Weber idea of provision—look out ahead, not just providing financially, but “How do you look out ahead for what the needs of others will be?”

**Bob:** What you are trying to impart to a young 15-year-old boy with that definition is: “You need to step into manhood and assume responsibility. Don’t be passive about your life—learn how to engage others, how to lead, and how to take responsibility for—not just for yourself—but for the people around you in providing and protecting.” Again, it’s not that women don’t do those things; but if we are putting it on the balance scale, men are called to those responsibilities in higher measure than women are called to those in Scripture.

**John:** Yes; and that’s really what we wanted to paint: “What’s a biblical perspective of manhood?” because there’s just a ton of confusion today about what it means to be a man. In fact, we went and asked some guys.

**Bob:** [Laughter] I love this! You did ask guys. In the same way young women were talking about Beyoncé as their model, you went and asked guys, “What is manhood?” and here is what they said.

**John:** Now, among all those action heroes, there was one name that really stood out above the rest.

[Excerpt from *Passport2Identity*]

**Boy:** Chuck Norris.

**Boy-1:** Chuck Norris.

**Boy-2:** Chuck Norris.

**Boy-3:** Chuck Norris.

**Boy-4:** Chuck Norris.

**Boy-5:** Because he leaves tears and blood in his wake.

**Boy-6:** Well, I guess he’s like buff and tough.

**Boy-7:** Strong, hairy—strong and hairy.
Narrator: Now, I’m sure you’ve heard some of those one-liners that tell you how tough Chuck Norris is—things like: “Death once had a near Chuck Norris experience.” How about this one? “Chuck Norris uses 4 x 8 sheets of plywood for toilet paper,” or “It only takes Chuck Norris three moves to win a game of connect four.” Here’s my favorite: “Chuck Norris used to tuck his parents in at night.” Now, that is tough!

[Studio]

Bob: Chuck’s the guy; huh?

John: Yes.

Bob: But interestingly, as you probed this with young men a little more, there was another name that came up maybe more often than Chuck Norris.

[Excerpt from Passport2Identity]

Narrator: Who do you think is the manliest man alive?

Boy-1: I’d probably say my dad. He’s a good father.

Boy-2: Probably my dad.

Boy-3: He’s really tough and interesting and doesn’t—I don’t know. It’s kind of hard to explain.

Boy-4: My dad because he is really nice. He always tries his best to make me happy, and he’s strong, and he does special stuff.

Boy-5: One person I can think of is probably my stepfather because he’s always like standing up for our family. He’s always doing what he knows is right. He’s always like honest with everything he does.

[Studio]

Bob: You know, when it comes right down to it, whether it is young men or young women, they are getting their definition of masculinity or femininity from mom and dad. That’s the loudest, clearest picture they have.

Dennis: And think about the other voices for a second that are absolutely pounding teenagers today with other images of what it means to be a man and a woman. They are not good messages.

Bob: No.
Dennis: And honestly, what you’ve done—here in *Passport2Identity* and putting together a resource for parents to have a weekend away with their kids to listen to these CDs and the stories and interact with them around what’s happening—is to contrast what the Bible says with what the world is saying and to have them realize that what the Bible’s talking about makes sense.

Bob: If this really is imprinted on the heart of a young man or a young woman: “If God has made you, as a young woman, He’s made you to be a nurturer; He’s made you to come alongside and assist and help; He’s made you to reflect holy beauty in what you do.” If that’s really imprinted on the heart of a young man or a young woman, then, as a mom or a dad is going through a session in *Passport2Identity* with a son or a daughter, that’ll resonate in the heart of that child. It’ll validate that what they are feeling is legitimate, and it’s good, and it is right, and you can respond to that impulse rather than being steered in a different direction by the cultural winds that are challenging those biblical ideas.

John: Every boy wants to be a man. We’ve got an awesome opportunity to show them a way and not leave them guessing. They want that—they want to know the way.

Dennis: And parents are looking at what’s happening in the culture today, and they’re really terrified. Some of the issues are life-and-death issues when it comes to young men and young women, who are listening to the voices of the culture and telling them to measure their lives around physical beauty. Girls, today, are—they are facing some issues around anorexia, bulimia. I mean—

Michelle: —self-harm.

Dennis: And that’s coming out of a culture that is talking about the physical expression of a person’s worth and value.

Bob: Michelle, that’s one of the things you pointed to in the *Passport2Identity* series—is that a lot of young women are trying to figure out: “Who am I? What does it mean to be a woman?” And that’s leading them to all kinds of destructive choices / all kinds of ways to try to resolve that, including things like starving themselves to death. Listen to how you portrayed this in the series.

[Excerpt from *Passport2Identity*]

**Young Woman:** I sat by Anna and Jesse at lunch. I’m so glad for best friends like them! Jesse bugs me, though. Maybe, it’s because she only eats salad for lunch. She’s skinnier and prettier than me. So, I guess she knows what she’s doing. Her clothes are like a size-0!
We used to hang out at the mall, but I hate it because she makes me feel fat. I guess I am—I guess I am. I’m a size-2, but how hard would it be to get to a size-0?

I’ve lost ten pounds in only three weeks! It’s not so bad to run every day. I’m almost to a size-0! My friends tell me I look great.

I went to this website, and they said that throwing up would make me lose weight faster. I tried it. It was gross, and I feel kind of guilty, but it’s working—it’s working. So, I guess I’ll keep going. My running is up to five miles a day.

My dad is getting on my case! He says I’m hard to live with. I can’t really talk to him because I don’t want him to find out about the throwing up—no one can know!

My dad is worried. He thinks I might have cancer or something, but good news—I passed a size-0. Food tastes awful, and I don’t want to eat anything. Every day, I leave the house before my parents can tell me to eat breakfast. That way I can save those calories for later in the day.

Janet and Jesse are acting weird. Maybe, they’re jealous, but why? They’re a lot thinner than I am! I started just drinking water at lunch—zero calories in that!

My dad and I got in a fight, and I don’t even know what’s wrong with him. What’s the problem with losing a few pounds?

I flunked my French exam the other day. I’m so tired all the time! Something weird is happening. When I wash my hair, a lot is falling out, and my stomach hurts all the time—probably because I’m eating way too much.

Two days ago, I had a salad—80 calories. Yesterday, I ate some green beans—30 calories. I can’t stop thinking about what I shouldn’t eat. It’s like there is a monster in my mind!—a monster in my mind.

I think everybody around me is crazy. I mean, everyone is overreacting—especially my dad. Do you know he’s here with me every day in the hospital? Whenever he sees the tube in my nose, it looks like he’s trying not to cry. Crazy—this is so stupid! Why don’t they just get me out of here? When they leave, I’ll turn the pump off—you’re killing me!

So, how did I get here? All of a sudden, black came into my eyes. My ears were ringing, and my head hurt really badly. Dad says I passed out and fell off the bed. When the doctor’s came, my dad says they ran in and hooked me up to a bunch of machines. They even put something in my mouth so I could breathe. I don’t remember much else. All I know is they’re crazy—crazy—crazy. Don’t they get it? Don’t they get it?

[Studio]
**Bob:** That is an excerpt from the *Passport2Identity* resource for young women that I think shows how a young woman’s mind can be conformed to the wrong way of thinking just by what’s going on in the culture around her. Her identity is all of a sudden wrapped up in appearance and in a very destructive way.

**Dennis:** And to the moms who are listening to this—who are terrified for their young daughters who are growing up—stories like this ought to be a wake-up call to say, “You have to be there in your child’s life, offering unconditional love, talking about these issues, unpacking what’s happening in the culture, what’s occurring around peer pressure and the false voices that are speaking into your daughter’s life—or maybe, it’s your son’s life—and counteract it with a strong relationship with your child.”

Imagine—just imagine getting away for a weekend with your daughter and allowing us to guide you through the CDs and the *Passport* workbook for the young lady or the young man and go through a weekend experience that will clarify this issue of identity around several issues—spiritual identity, gender identity, emotional/relationship identity. I mean, young people today want to know how to live an authentic life.

**Bob:** And if a 15-year-old young man or young woman can have a biblical picture of what manhood looks and what womanhood looks like, how much farther ahead is that young man or that young woman going to be than his or her peers in life just because they understand: “This is what God made me to be / made me to do,” and they embrace it and they live it out.

**Dennis:** And I know there are a lot of parents listening to me right now, and they’re going: “I’m terrified about doing this. I don’t know how.” This will guide you through a process that will open up some discussions—I promise you—that you’ve never had with your son or your daughter. And you need to have them. They need these discussions with you. I wish, at this point, I could reach through the radio and put my arm around a parent and say: “You’ve got to do this! This is life and death for a group of young people today who are growing up in the most perilous days, I think, that have ever existed for teenagers.”

**Bob:** But you know that your 15-year-old son or daughter—when you say: “Hey, let’s do a two-day getaway. We’re going to listen to some CDs about your identity in Christ,”—you can see the eyes starting to roll back in their heads right now; can’t you?

**Dennis:** And that’s where we’ve learned a lot from *Passport2Purity*, which is a preparation for adolescence resource. You’ve got to make it fun; and you’ve got to make it an experience like they haven’t had, perhaps, in recent years.

**Bob:** Put a bribe in the mix—

**Dennis:** Yes!
Bob: —to make it work.

Dennis: Take them to a ball game, take them shopping—whatever would communicate to your child: “This is going to be a special, fun weekend; but you know what? We’re going to talk about—father-to-son / mother-to-daughter—real life issues that are occurring all around us.”

Here is the thing—these issues are there. And they are just coming at these kids. I want to go back and say: “I understand how a parent feels ill-equipped. They don’t feel like they know the Bible well enough. They don’t feel like they’ve been trained. I get all that. We had six teenagers—we’ve been there.” This resource will help you relate to your child / talk with your child and open issues up to have a conversation. And it’s not bad, Bob, to say your child: “I don’t know the answer to that, but I’ll go find out.”

Michelle: Can I just say something right here?—is that, from the child’s standpoint, they want someone to talk to—they really do. They want your attention—

Bob: Even when they are rolling their eyes back in their head?

Michelle: —even when they’re rolling their eyes. If you get below the surface, they want someone to talk to. Who better to talk to them and show them love than their parents?

Bob: And if you tell them they can’t take their driver’s license test until they do this—that’ll probably work; don’t you imagine? [Laughter]

We do have copies of Passport2Identity for young men and young women available in our FamilyLife Today Resource Center. You can go online at FamilyLifeToday.com and find out more about this resource. But we’re really hoping you’ll go ahead now and pick out a couple of days this spring or this summer when you can have some time to get away with your son or your daughter and go through this material. That’s step one—is to set aside the time. Then, step two is to go online at FamilyLifeToday.com and order the kit. So, again, the website, FamilyLifeToday.com; or order by phone at 1-800-358-6329. That’s 1-800-“F” as in family, “L” as in life, and then the word, “TODAY.” Ask about Passport2Identity when you give us a call.

By the way, FamilyLife has a brand-new app. If you’ve got a smartphone or a tablet—a mobile device of some sort—you can go to your app store; and if you type in “FamilyLife” as one word, it should pull up the app automatically. First thing you see—it’s free for a download. It gives you instant access to FamilyLife Today content, including instant access to each day’s program and our archive of FamilyLife Today programs from years gone by. So, you’ve got the whole library right there in your pocket or on your pad. Download the brand-new FamilyLife app. And if you have any questions about where to find it, go to FamilyLifeToday.com. We’ve got a link there that will help you get it downloaded to your smartphone or to your device.
Now, we want to say, “Congratulations!” today to David and Catherine Berube, who live in Montpelier, Virginia. They have been married 13 years today. “Congratulations on your 13th anniversary.” They’ve been to a number of Weekend to Remember getaways.

And of course, we’re all about anniversaries, here at FamilyLife. We are the Proud Sponsor of Anniversaries™ because the reason we exist is so that more couples will have more anniversaries throughout their lifetime. We want to provide practical biblical help and hope for your marriage and your family so that your marriage and your family, not only go the distance, but thrive in the process.

And we are grateful to those of you who partner with us to make this happen—those of you who support the ministry of FamilyLife Today with your donations. In fact, if you can help with a donation today, we’d like to say, “Thank you,” by sending you Barbara Rainey’s brand-new book, Letters to My Daughters: The Art of Being a Wife. It’s our thank-you gift when you make a donation, online, at FamilyLifeToday.com. When you call 1-800-FL-TODAY to make a donation, just ask for a copy of the book when you do that. Or you can request the book and mail your donation to FamilyLife Today at Post Office Box 7111, Little Rock, AR; the zip code is 72223.

Now, tomorrow, we want to talk about how you can coach your son or your daughter to turn to God’s Word / to turn to the Scripture to find answers for how to do life. We’re going to talk about how important that is / how foundational that is and how you can help your teenager think in that direction. We’ll talk about that tomorrow. Hope you can tune in for that.

I want to thank our engineer today, Keith Lynch, along with our entire broadcast production team. On behalf of our host, Dennis Rainey, I’m Bob Lepine. We will see you back next time for another edition of FamilyLife Today.

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