

A Celebration of Biblical Womanhood

Gen. 2, Titus 2, 1 Cor. 11

THRIVE! Growing and Changing in the Christian Life

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livinghopechurch.net

“Earth has nothing more tender than a woman’s heart
when it is the abode of piety.”

– Martin Luther

If you don’t have a Bible, there should be one in the seat in front of you. Open your Bible to **Genesis 2** The title of our message this morning is “Celebrating Biblical Womanhood.”

The Disaster of American Culture

Today people want to blur the line between the genders. For years there has been a movement in America that is really an attack on the home, and it is also an attack on women. There has been a movement that wants men to be women and women to be men.

The Bible presents women to be feminine from the beginning. “He created them male and female.” He created them “in His image.”

Today we want to celebrate the beauty and wisdom of biblical femininity and womanhood. It is true that the one who “rocks the cradle” rules the world!

The History of a Woman’s Place

Some people charge that Christianity, the Bible, and the Church are anti-female and horribly oppressive to women. Does God really hate women? Did the apostle Paul disrespect them in his New Testament writings?

It wasn’t until 1873 that a woman was granted custody rights of her children. And that was only until the child was 7 years old. Before that, the father was automatically granted custody. That meant that if a husband was upset with his wife, he could keep the children from his wife. They were not offered credit. In 1920 women received the right to vote. Before 1970, women could not apply for a credit card.

Many things have changed for the better regarding a woman’s care and rights in our society. But it wasn’t always that way. In many parts of the world women are treated like property. In Jesus’ day, he raised the standard for women.

In Alvin Schmidt’s book *How Christianity Changed the World*, he writes,

“What would be the status of women in the Western world today had Jesus Christ never entered the human arena?”

One way to answer this question is to look at the status of women in most present-day Islamic countries. Here women are still denied many rights that are available to men, and when they appear in public, they must be veiled. In Saudi Arabia, for instance, women are even barred from driving an automobile. Whether in Saudi Arabia or in many other Arab

countries where the Islamic religion is adhered to strongly, a man has the right to beat and sexually desert his wife [and have more wives], all with the full support of the Koran . . .

This command is the polar opposite of what the New Testament says regarding a man's relationship with his wife. Paul told the Christians in Ephesus, 'Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.' And he added, 'He who loves his wife loves himself.'¹

Let us celebrate femininity and womanhood today.

Outline

We celebrate biblical womanhood by...

- Celebrate the **nature** of womanhood: Gen. 2
- Celebrate the **ministry** of womanhood: Tit. 2, 1 Cor. 11.

I. Celebrate the **Nature** of Biblical Womanhood, Gen. 1-2

What Femininity is Not

Many in today's culture view femininity as being personality-driven, as though being a shopaholic, a flirt, disinterested in sports, preoccupied by high heels and makeup, or loving interior design and baking is what determines a woman's femininity. However, we do not see in Scripture that a woman's personality, interests, hobbies, or what colors she prefers are indicative of her femininity. As believers, we need to look deeper than surface level. Femininity at its core is not about a personality. A woman can love sports, hunting, fishing, and cars, and be just as feminine as the woman who loves interior design, shopping, and shoes. Both personalities can fall within the vast spectrum of femininity. Femininity is rooted in who God has created a woman to be through biological composition and inward spirit. It is not dependent on interests, hobbies, or personality.

The Elements of Biblical Femininity

The elements of biblical femininity we see are a relational capacity, nurturing nature, vulnerability, beauty, and responsiveness.

Imago Dei

Genesis 1:26-27, "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." 27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

Man and woman were created to bear the image or likeness of God. Mankind is the soul's personal reflection of God's righteous character. To image God is to mirror His holiness. This

¹ Schmidt, Alvin. How Christianity Changed the World. Originally published under the title Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), which is the copy I reference in these notes.

also includes human rationality, conscience, creativity, relationships, and everything we are as rational beings.²

Quote by John Calvin

You may say, but we are sinners! Haven't we forfeited our dominion to the wicked one when we sinned? John Calvin has something to say about this. He says: "But, since in Adam dominion over the world was taken away from us, every time we touch a gift of God, it is polluted by our own filth; it is unclean to us, unless God comes to our help, and uniting us with the body of his Son, once again makes us lords of the earth."

1. A Call to Rule

Both are to Rule

We bear a resemblance to God. Line three boldly affirms the dual sexuality of man. We are male and female. God's intention, stated in verse 26, that both genders should rule: ". . . and let them have dominion..." Man was created as royalty to rule in God's world, male and female alike bearing the divine glory equally. Yet just as there is an order in the Trinity, with the Son submitting to the Father, and the Spirit submitting to both the Father and the Son, there is an order in creation.

To rule means at least three things. 1) to take responsibility, 2) to carry out one's vocation with excellence, and 3) to multiply both biologically and spiritually.

A married woman is to do this in the sphere of the home. She is to be a helper to her husband and to bear and raise her children to the same.

God calls us to various vocations, but a married woman's first vocation is the home. Paul said many years ago in **1 Timothy 5:14**, Paul says, "So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander."

A married woman is to "manage their household" so that Satan does not slander God. A woman is to rule by bearing and raising children if she is able and to guide the order of the home.

The Order of Creation

Yet there is an order of creation that reflects the Trinity. There is a partnership specifically in marriage that reflects the Trinity. **1 Corinthians 11:3**, "But I want you to understand that the head of every man is Christ, the head of a wife is her husband, and the head of Christ is God."

It's Not Easy!

I heard about an older couple sitting by the fire side. With his arm around his sweetheart, he turned to his wife and said, "After fifty years I've found you tried and true". His wife was hard of hearing so she said, "What?" He repeated, "After fifty years I've found you tried and true." She replied, "After fifty years I'm tired of you too!"

² Grudem, Wayne (2006-08-08). Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism (Kindle Locations 2180-2184). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

Ladies, I hope after fifty years you are not tired of your husband! The secret to a happy and lasting marriage is for you and your husband to live according to God's design. God has a created order that allows all things to function according to His perfect plan.

What About Singles?

If you are a single lady, you are not obligated to submit to any one man. But just as a woman serves her husband, you are to serve the Lord as you serve the church. The truth is all single people are called to serve the Lord's church. Paul says in **1 Cor. 7:8, 28, 32**, "8 But I say to the unmarried and to widows that it is good for them if they remain even as I. 28 Yet those who marry will have worldly troubles, and I would spare you that". 32 I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord."

The Greek Word "Submit"

In Ephesians 5, wives are called to "submit" to their husbands. The word "submit" is Greek military term meaning "to arrange troop divisions in a military fashion under the command of a leader". God is our general! We are all to serve where God has put us. Ranks in an army must function together. Without that you have disarray.

Trinitarian Headship

First, submission reflects the Trinity. When it comes to our standing before God, there is no distinction between male and female. We're all equally created in the image of God, equally fallen and in need of salvation. Submission isn't a matter of who is smarter or the most deserving. Submission in marriage is simply another reflection of the beautiful pattern of roles seen in the Trinity. **The Son has submitted to the Father through all eternity, fulfilling His will, seeking to please Him.**³

Secondly, submission does not mean you give into the sinful demands of your husband. No matter what authority has been given to a person by God, no one has the authority to make you compromise your conscience. When the religious leaders told the apostles to stop preaching in the name of Jesus, they replied "We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). If your husband asks you to lie, you should kindly refuse.

Thirdly, submission does not mean always agreeing with everything your husband does. All human authorities make mistakes. Sometimes we husbands think we are making fantastic decisions, and they turn out to be disastrous. You are allowed to respectfully give counsel to your husband. You are his helper. He needs your help.

If after you've clearly given your perspective and prayerfully presented your point of view, your husband continues on a course that you disagree with but which isn't sinful, you are obligated to support and obey him. In the meantime, you can pray for your husband to make wise decisions, and to help you to trust in the sovereign plan of God.

Finally, submission does not mean that your husband takes the place of Christ. You are to submit to him as unto the Lord, but only the Lord is going to satisfy your longings. Your husband is going to fail. I didn't have to tell you that he has already failed you miserably. Wives, the sooner you realize that the deepest longings of your heart can only be satisfied by God, the happier you will be.

³ Elyse Fitzpatrick. *Helper by Design* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2003), 147.

Ladies Called to Rule

Ladies, you are to rule over this planet. The place of women in the first-century Roman world and in Judaism has been well-documented in various recent books and documentaries.

Most frequently, women were regarded as second-class citizens in the ancient world. Even the Old Testament presents situations where women were depersonalized. Yet we must remember that the Bible recording sinful situations never equal's God's endorsement. God never authorized or approved behavior that depersonalized women. There are other things recorded in Scripture such as child sacrifice, polygamy, ritualistic sex in religion, and wife abuse that have never been sanctioned by God.⁴ In fact, God warns Israel on numerous occasions that dire consequences will come for such sin. They are taken away into captivity.

Christ Elevated Women

For Christ, women have an intrinsic value equal to that of men. Jesus said, “. . . at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’” (Matthew 19:4; f. Genesis 1:27).

He showed how they had a place in society in several ways.

1. Our Lord spoke publically with women. This was uncommon in the ancient world. Yet Jesus treatment of women is revolutionary. He has quite profound conversations with women, whether it be the Samaritan woman or the widow of Nain (Luke 7:12-13), the woman with the bleeding disorder (Luke 8:48; cf. Matthew 9:22; Mark 5:34), and a woman who called to Him from a crowd (Luke 11:27-28).

Similarly, Jesus addressed a woman bent over for eighteen years (Luke 13:12) and a group of women on the route to the cross (Luke 23:27-31).⁵

Jesus spoke to women as “daughters of Abraham” and spoke to them on a very intellectually high level.

2. Jesus did not gloss over sin in the lives of the women He met. He held women personally responsible for their own sin as seen in His dealings with the woman at the well (John 4:16-18), the woman taken in adultery (John 8:10-11), and the sinful woman who anointed His feet (Luke 7:44-50). Their sin was not condoned, but confronted. Each had the personal freedom and a measure of self-determination to deal with the issues of sin, repentance, and forgiveness.

3. Jesus' regard for the intrinsic equality of women and men is also exhibited in his view of divorce and lust. In His treatment of divorce (Matthew 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18), Jesus clearly regards women not as property but as persons. They have legitimate rights and should be respected. They are not to be treated as objects of lust but as people created in the image of God.

4. In the early church, women frequently labored together with men (Acts 16:14-15; Romans 16:3, 12; Philippians 4:3).⁶

5. Jesus gave women status and respect equal to men. Not only did he break with the anti-female culture of his era, but he set a standard for Christ-followers. Peter and Paul both rose to the challenge in what they wrote in the New Testament.

In a culture that feared the power of a woman's external beauty and feminine influence, Peter encouraged women to see themselves as valuable because God saw them as valuable. His call to aspire to the inner beauty of a trusting and tranquil spirit is staggeringly counter-cultural.

⁴ Grudem, Wayne (2006-08-08). *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Kindle Locations 2646-2650). Crossway. Kindle Edition.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

He writes in 1 Peter 3:3-4, "Do not let your adorning be external—... but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious." Women are valuable because of who they are on the inside.

A Call to Rule

So ladies, I call you to rule and have dominion over the earth. Pursue what God made you for. God has so much for you to do as a woman. You are called, if you are married, as a helper to your husband. And if you are single you are called to rule through so many ways.

My wife pursued nursing. She did not know if she would be married. My girls have their own ideas. They are pursuing college. That's not for everyone. But we want our sons and daughters to be prepared for life. They need to prepare for life. Our daughters may not get married. Or if they are married, they are not guaranteed that their husband will always be healthy.

A call to rule is a call to education. I so appreciate the indepth conversations I have with my wife. The Proverbs 31 woman, though her place is in the home, is a woman of industry and contributes to the finances of the home. That's not possible or advisable in every home, but for some it is a noble endeavor. Most importantly, a godly woman will rule by ministering to other women and children. Be a student of the Bible. Be a student of the arts and the sciences. Teach others how to walk with God and to enjoy and rule over God's creation.

2. A Call to Relate

First, God has created women to be relational. That means a woman can have multiple relationships that have many layers. God has created a woman to value deep connections.

We see in Genesis 2:18-25, that Eve was created with the express purpose of providing relationship for another. It is in the nature of a woman to want to connect.

Gen. 2:18, "Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him."

Gen. 2:24, "Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh."

A woman longs to feel heard and understood. For a woman, everything is always connected.

Even in our curse in Genesis 3:16, we see that all the woman's curses are related to her relationships: her spouse and children.

The Word Helper

Gen. 2:18, "Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a **helper** fit for him."

A woman is created to be relational. This true for both single and married women. If a woman is single, her calling is to help the church. She is married as it were to Christ. She is to assist His bride.

With married women, when some married men hear the word *helper*, they think of someone who is going to cook, clean, do the laundry, and keep the kids quiet while the man watches his ball game.

Television sitcoms are full of these marriage portrayals, and the programs usually get a lot of laughs. But there's nothing funny about a husband who interprets *helper* simply as a maid, cook, and baby-sitter. A woman doesn't have to be a wife to fulfill any of these roles. You can hire people to do these tasks.

Now don't misunderstand. This doesn't mean a wife can neglect or pass off her obligations at home. There is no substitute for her touch in the home, but if that's all her role consists of, then something is wrong because this is not the primary way that a wife serves as a helper to her husband.

The primary way that a wife helps her husband is to help him become the leader that God has appointed him to be. A wife ought to be her husband's chief fan, chief encourager, and chief support system. But she can't help her husband take the lead if she is constantly tearing him down or fighting him for control.

In the Bible, a helper is someone who comes alongside another person to lift and build up that person. Jesus called the Holy Spirit our "Helper" in John 14:16. The Spirit's role is a good example of the way a helper works. Jesus said that the Spirit would not magnify Himself, but would glorify Jesus (John 16:13–14).

Now a wife may be saying, "If that's what being a helper means, I don't want to do it. Why should I spend my time glorifying my husband and lifting him up? The only way I can do that is by denying myself and my gifts and becoming my husband's doormat. If he gets all the glory, that means I don't get any. Besides, I've got more education and a better job than he has."

That assessment may seem harsh, but it's exactly how some wives view the idea of being their husbands' helpers. Is it an accurate assessment? Not at all, and the Holy Spirit's position in the Godhead proves it.⁷

3. A Call to Nurture

A Mother's Nurture

In **Isaiah 49:15**, it states, "Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, but I will not forget you. Behold I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me." Women reflect the heart of God in a way that men cannot necessarily do as well because they cannot be mothers.

This is true whether you are married or single. Ladies, you are to be a refuge for little ones. Be their teachers. You are to be a refuge for other ladies. And many of you are to a refuge for a husband.

Ladies are **biologically** built to nurture. Think of the fact that you have the ability to nurture another human being inside your womb. You have the ability to feed and care for that little baby.

A woman's very composition is that which breeds and nurtures life. There are many women who sadly deal with infertility. There are others who are simply in a season of singleness. These women still possess the nurturing elements of their body in their biological composition. A woman is not less feminine if she is single or if she is married and unable to bear children. She is just as womanly in form and spirit as the woman who has twenty children. She still has

⁷ Evans, T. (2002). *Tony Evans Speaks Out on a Woman's Role in the Home* (pp. 40–41). Chicago, IL: Moody Press.

the hard-wired design of a nurturing creature, whether or not God chooses to use those bodily tools to produce offspring. She is a nurturer, and it serves her well to operate out of that role, whether or not that includes a husband or biological children.

Ladies have a way of seeing things in a kind, connected, and nurturing way that men cannot. God says in **Isaiah 66:13**, “As one whom his mother comforts, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.”

Withholding Nurture is Sinful

Because of mankind’s sinful condition, women can use that same relational influence to hurt those we love. Proverbs 25:24 , 14:1 ,21:19 , 19:13 , 27:15-16 , and chapter 7 are not written to mock women or put us down but instead reveal the relational power we possess and how destructive we can be when we abuse that power and wield it wrongly.

Proverbs 25:24, “It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.”

Prov. 14:1, “The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.”

Prov. 21:19, “It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and fretful woman.”

Again these verses are not written to mock women or put them down but instead reveal the relational power they possess and how destructive we can be when they abuse that power and wield it wrongly.

Proverbs 31, however, paints a different picture of a woman who brings honor to her household through her character. She uses that relational power for the good of her husband and children.

Both married and single women are called to use their relational capacity for discipleship in the home and in the church.

4. A Call to be Vulnerable

A Precious Vase

First Peter 3:7 exhorts men to love their wives in “an understanding way, as with someone weaker, since she is a woman; and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life, so that your prayers will not be hindered.” This is not suggesting that women are pathetic or measly; it means that we are more delicate and should be treated as such.

In fact, in 2 Corinthians 12 it speaks of how Christ’s power is perfected in our weakness and when we are weak, then we are strong. While this particular passage is applicable to both men and women, it paints a picture of the beauty of being able to be soft and vulnerable. Women are worthy of protection and those who can overcome trials and tribulation and still be soft, gentle creatures excel in this area of strength in weakness.

Women are weak in the sense of a priceless vase. They are to be protected. They are to be prized. They are not less valuable but more valuable because of this.

The World's Way

The world's way is for a woman to close herself off from being vulnerable. When women wall up their hearts to prevent any possibility of being hurt, victimized, or wounded, they unknowingly keep out the good things in our lives and lock the pain inside of our hearts. You should protect yourself, but **find worthy boundaries within the Body of Christ.**

Women may choose to wall up through being defensive, being sexually promiscuous to control men, taking on a false masculinity in dress or action, they may try to eliminate the need for men in their lives, operate out of the curse and rule over men, or defensively detach from people so they can never get in to reject you.

You might try to avoid relationship altogether, or simply operate in a manipulative way to try to control your relationships (i.e. nagging, putting down others, being passive aggressive, gossiping, slandering, busy-bodding, etc.). But none of this works.

Healing if You are Abused

You are called to be vulnerable. If you have been bullied or abused, you need to heal. That is what the Body of Christ is for. Build up healing relationships among godly women.

Let me also speak to those women who are healthy spiritually. You are called to work hard to help nurture the women in our congregation who need to heal. Some of you ladies have come out of a life where you have needed to close yourself off. But don't stay there. You need to heal so that you can help others. You are called to be vulnerable. You might be a victim, but don't stay a victim.

5. A Capacity to be Beautiful

True Beauty

This is not predicated on outward appearance but is not to the exclusion of it. Being outwardly attractive is not nearly as important as being inwardly beautiful.

Proverbs 31:30, “Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.”

There is a weight in the word “beautiful” that speaks to an inward quality far beyond a woman's physical appearance. **1 Peter 3:3-5** reads, “Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear—⁴ but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.⁵ For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves...”

Don't Confuse True Beauty

In a very materialistic city like Chicago, there are many women who focus solely on looking good on the outside and have little to no interest in godliness. This issue extends beyond the lost world and into the church.

There are many of us who are more concerned with outward adornment and your hair than your are with the heart of your Lord and where your hearts might be in relation to Him.

Many women spend hours investing in their physical appearance to make sure that others are impressed, but find it difficult to spend a few minutes in the word of God or in prayer for others. There is no time to evangelize because you are lost in our mirrors gazing at your own “beauty.”

Inner beauty

Man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. God cares about your inward beauty far more than about how our makeup looks. And if that is the Lord’s perspective on things, then we must adjust our lens to His.

Brokenness and Beauty

Another broken way a woman can view beauty is to view outward beauty as disdainful or unholy in some way. When Peter speaks of not adorning one’s self outwardly in Timothy when he speaks of putting the emphasis on the inner person, he is not saying that women should be unattractive.

The Women of the Bible

It is no virtue to try to be unattractive. We see the lover in Song of Solomon tell his bride repeatedly how beautiful she is. We see women in Scripture like Sarah, Bathsheba, Rachel, Esther, and Rebekah described as beautiful women. This is not mentioned as a mark against them, but as a kind description of them. It is not wrong to be beautiful or to want to look attractive. We see the Proverbs 31 woman as one who dresses nicely. Verse 22 explains, “She makes coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.” In Peter’s text mentioned earlier it does not say not to adorn one’s self outwardly, but to not *merely* do so. God is frequently described as beautiful in the Bible, so to dismiss beauty as being ungodly is misguided.

6. A Capacity to be Responsive

Be Responsive!

The last element of femininity is being responsive, and by that I mean that we were originally created as a helper for the male. We see in Genesis 2 that there was not a suitable helper found for the man, so out of man, God made woman. Her very design was to be a suitable helper for the man whom God had already created. Adam was still given the authority over creation and their relationship, and we see throughout the Old and New Testament church the idea of male headship and authority. We see in **Titus 2:5** and **Ephesians 5:21-33** that women are to submit to their husbands in a reflection of their submission to the Lord.

Respond!

All Christians are called to submit to the leaders of government and in the church. It should be noted that responsiveness in women does not mean that all women must or should submit to all men. There are godless men who have no authority and are ineligible to lead others.

The call for submission in women is appropriate only within the specific contexts laid out in Scripture (marriage, male headship/eldership in the church body, etc.).

Husbands are called to listen to their wives. Wives are to share their thoughts and desires with their husbands and carry out their calling within the family and the leadership of the husband.

Single ladies are called to minister in the context of the church and to devote themselves to it.

Be a Refuge

Being wired to respond makes you a refuge. Your husband will take refuge in you. Your children take refuge in you. Singles and widows, so many take refuge in you.

Let me say this clearly. Mom and Dad, you are responsible to bring the godly influences over your children's life. You are to shelter and to overhang and protect them from ungodly influences until they are out of your house.

There's an old Chinese proverb that says, "One generation plants the trees, and another gets the shade." God designed the family to bring a shade of godly values and refreshing, relieving shelter to children to protect them from the raging, blistering sun of immorality and directionless living that will destroy their lives. Children are exposed to this blistering sun many times because the parents don't care. It's not uncommon in our day for children to be sent off to a babysitter, a day-care center, or school so Mom and Dad can do their thing without cramping their style.

Be Shade for Your Children

Instead of the loving shade of Mom and Dad, they get the blistering sun of godless TV, immoral friends, and innocence destroying worldly influences. Mom and Dad in many ways have checked out, yet they wonder why their child is so blistered and broken.

- If you allow garbage into your child, then garbage will come out of him. If you don't protect him or her from the blistering rays of ungodly influences, then don't be surprised when your child is burned and hardened by the ungodly world.
- When Mom and Dad can't get along, the shelter is further removed, and children get angry and confused.
- When the home is torn apart, the children have a rage inside of them.
- When they are exposed to the sex and sensuality that is reserved for marriage and should be holy and they see it trampled on, they don't know what to do.
- When their parents instead of protecting them, tell their children, "Just do whatever you want", it's like the parents giving their children permission to go into a forest filled with landmines. Parts of their innocence are blown away forever. They bring this baggage into their marriages and instead of shelter and shade, the blistering goes on to another generation.

II. Celebrate the **Ministry** of Biblical Womanhood, Tit. 2, 1 Cor. 11.

Holy Scripture

Titus 2:1-5, “But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. 2 Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness...”

Character of Older Women

The Character of a Woman

Verse 3, “Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, 4 and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.”

Younger women are told to maintain godly character, and to be willing to be taught. Older women are have four qualities.

1.) She is reverent in her behavior. She fears the Lord and it shows. A reverent woman isn't selfish or rude. She doesn't cut in line or cut people off when they talk. She is patient and humble with others. She is not jealous or competitive but rather self-sacrificing. She fears the Lord and obeys his word.

2.) She is not a slanderer. In the Greek, the word slander is *diabolos* – the same word translated as *Devil*. It means to accuse or give false information. It is so very important that the older women in the church look at the younger women and LOVE them rather than accuse them of their short comings. Don't judge them –rather come along side them and guide them. Don't let the age gap be a rift rather build a bridge and connect with them. *Let's pray Psalm 141:3 over our words:*

“Set a guard over my mouth, O Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.”

3.) She is not a slave to wine. It is not talking about drunkenness but rather enslavement or addiction to wine. Alcohol has an addictive nature about it. Whether it is wine or anything else, you are to be a woman of self-control. Show the younger women how to say no to things that will enslave them. *I Corinthians 10:31 says “Whatever you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”*

4.) She teaches what is good to the younger women. A woman who possesses the above three qualities is qualified to teach the younger women. Are you qualified? Do you possess the above qualities?

If your answer is yes, then you my friend, are to teach! You are living a life of holy pursuit, love and godliness. And the young women NEED your influence.

It might be better to think of this teaching not always as a sermon outline, but really as the nuggets of wisdom you have gained from the Scriptures!

The Work of Older Women

Ministry of a Married Woman

Married Women are specifically addressed in Mothers of children are called by God to be “keepers at home”. Older women are to “train the young women to love their husbands and children, 5 to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled” (Titus 2:4-5).

This should be no surprise. It is actually becoming popular again for Mom’s to be at home. This has been the key to the family’s survival for thousands of years, and some thought we could change it.

Paul said many years ago in **1 Timothy 5:14**, Paul says, “So I would have younger widows marry, bear children, manage their households, and give the adversary no occasion for slander.”

Safest Place for Your Children

The safest place for your children is in the home with their mother. A mother whose primary responsibility is in the home and would hardly be free to pursue outside employment. Any wife who fulfills God's priorities in her life and home will be a very busy lady.

It is a full time job to raise a child. It takes all the influence you have. It's not uncommon in our day for children to be dispatched to a babysitter, day-care center, or school so Mom and Dad can do their thing without cramping their style.

Exceptions

There are exceptions. Some women are put in a place where they are single moms. They have no choice. They are to work for the glory of God. Others are able to get help from grandma and grandpa and for various reasons need to work.

We live in a broken and fallen world, so there are many reasons why the biblical ideal may not work out. But a woman’s focus must always be her home. You are to manage the household.

Newsweek

A *Newsweek* article related the following:

“Parents' lives are so hectic that schools often can't find them when problems arise; one mother informed a Chicago school that she didn't give her unlisted telephone number to anyone. With so many parents working, one third of all elementary students return to empty homes.... Some kids reach kindergarten without having been read to or even talked to, and can interact with other children only by hitting them” (“Where Are the Parents?” September 1990, p. 55).

The same article quoted these alarming findings from the Bureau of Labor and Statistics:

"73% of mothers with school-age children work outside the home. Nearly one fourth of all children under age 18 live with a single parent, and only 7% of school-age children live in a two-parent household where there is only one wage earner" (p. 56).

Raising Children

Raising a child is a fulltime responsibility. There is no substitute for spending time with your child. You are responsible to organize your child's life according to godliness. You will give an account.

The Ministry of the Word

Women Ministering in the Body

1 Cor. 11:4-5, "Every man who prays or prophesies with his head covered dishonors his head,⁵ but every wife who prays or prophesies with her head uncovered dishonors her head, since it is the same as if her head were shaven."

Without giving an extensive commentary on whether or not a woman should wear head coverings, let me say that it is important that our married ladies are living in submission to their husbands. Only a woman who is right in her marriage should minister in the church. It is a shame for a woman to pray or prophesy who is not in right relation with her husband.

Ministry of the Word

While there are various interpretations of this passage, it can be said that it certainly allows for women to prophesy in the services. What does that mean? Well it cannot mean to exposit God's Word as a teacher because that is prohibited. 1 Timothy 2:12, "I do not permit a woman to teach or to exercise authority over a man; rather, she is to remain quiet."

This cannot mean that a woman has no part in the services of our church concerning the word. She is told she is allowed to pray and prophesy. She is not to take up an official shepherding office in the church, because that would be exercising rulership.

What women are encouraged to do is to testify of the Scriptures. They are to read the Scriptures. They may sing the Scriptures in song or direct a choir. And they are to pray in public meetings.

Conclusion

Let this message be a call to be a woman. Do not apologize for being a woman. Use all that God has given you to nurture and promote beauty in the body of Christ. Older women teach the younger. Be a woman who impacts the world!