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## Grace-Energized Homemakers



Part 45 (070812PM)

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For the past 20 centuries God has offered to every married woman the privilege of turning each moment she spends in her hut, tent, cave, flat, apartment, or palace--into eternal crowns to cast at Christ's feet.

Since Paul sat to pen one word "homemakers" (NKJV) ["keepers at home" (KJV); "to be busy at home" (NIV); "workers at home" (NAS)] to his young son-in-the-ministry named Titus, every grace-energized homemaker can offer in worshipful service to God-- each dish that she washed, each towel she folded, each diaper she changed, and each weary day she spent with self-centered family members.

[Titus 2:5](#) promises each grace-energized homemaker<sup>[1]</sup>[1] that they can redeem every moment they spend in the endless duties of the home into worship offerings of obedience to God.

### Redeeming the Time

One word, chosen by God is this word homemaker.

One word, designed by God as the role-specific ministry that pleases Him, is what He wants for godly women who offer their lives to Him through their ministry to their home.

As we open to this next virtue that God desires to be cultivated in the lives of grace-energized women—the very concept is increasingly offensive to our 21<sup>st</sup> century world. "Admonish the younger women to be...homemakers".

The verses of this chapter were sent as a call to First Century men and women energized by grace to live an extraordinary spiritual life in a very unspiritual culture.

The Cretan church was saved, bought from the slave market of sin (redeemed), but still had clinging to their lives the garbage of their culture. They had generations of bad thinking, false thinking, and warped lives.

Of all the godly traits older women of the faith were to exhibit and train the younger women to embrace—this is the most controversial. In our liberated women, egalitarian society nothing riles modern women more than the image of a home-bound-slaving woman that this passage seems to portray.

And even in the church of today nothing seems harder than to convince wives that their primary ministry ordained by God is to be their husbands; and mothers that their primary calling is to disciple and nurture their children.

The lesson of this verse is not so much that a woman's place is in the home as it is that **her priority is for her home**, and that calling from God becomes evident by her choices. It is not whether she works outside the home or not--just being in or out of a building that you live in, is not the measure of this virtue.

God explains that her home is a wife and mother's special domain; and must always be her highest priority. It is within the home that a woman can provide the best ways to express her love for her husband and children—by obeying the Lord and following His plan!

### God's Plan is Always Best

Paul is explaining that by God's design a woman who is a wife and mother finds her greatest fulfillment in obeying this priority from God. A married woman who is a believer must make a conscious choice to obey the Lord and make her priority of life to be her home. Marriage for a believer brings men and women into definite God-ordained roles.

Whether our culture agrees or not, whether it is easy or hard, whether others obey or not—God is looking for women who see their home as His priority for them. They are to first focus upon loving

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their husbands with an emotional, intimate friendship. And then to love their children with a love as we have already seen, is always kind.

Such a woman as Paul says in I Timothy 2: 11-15 will never be second-class in her accomplishments for Christ's glory, nor in her reward. You can be as great a servant of the Lord as is possible to be in this life by living out your God-given priority of loving your husband and your children in a home that is your priority!

The term "workers at home" in [Titus 2:5](#) is from the compound Greek word **oikourgos** which is built from **oikos** (house) and a **ergon** (work). The Greek word **ergon** isn't just about general work but a specific job focus. That is why in the New Testament it is used of strategic spiritual ministry. When God asks a grace-energized woman to focus on their God-ordained role as a homemaker, He is asking them to join in with a ministry strategic to the plan of God.

A grace-energized woman believes that she has been called of God to do the work of homemaking for the Lord Himself.

- Jesus declared his focused ministry when He said, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His **work**" ([John 4:34](#), emphasis added) and, on another occasion, "I glorified Thee on the earth, having accomplished the **work** which Thou hast given Me to do" ([17:4](#), emphasis added).
- The Spirit of God clarified the focused ministry of the church at Antioch "set apart for Me Barnabas and Saul for the **work** to which I have called them" ([Acts 13:2](#), emphasis added).
- Paul explained the focused ministry of Epaphroditus, who "came close to death for the **work** of Christ" ([Phil. 2:30](#), emphasis added), and Paul says that the faithful leaders in the church of Thessalonica shared that focused ministry ([1 Thess. 5:13](#)).

Think of the joy it can be to go through life doing exactly what God designed you to do, wants you to do, and walks through life giving His grace to help you succeed. That is what a grace-energized homemaker has to look forward to—loving the focused ministry God gave her to do. Paul told Titus to speak these virtues because—

## God Has Given His Plan

In our culture there is probably no distinctive of the Christian life that is more derided than this one. In our liberated-woman-individualistic-independent-culture a grace-energized homemaker sounds like a dinosaur or worse.

Even among Bible-believing Christians there are many that want to relegate Paul's instructions to Titus and Timothy concerning the God-designed roles and responsibilities to being cultural instructions for that locality only—and not supra-cultural Biblical commands from an unchanging Lord of His Church.

If we make Paul's Scriptural instructions to women as being biased because of his Jewish upbringing and culture and no longer binding, authoritative, or relevant we come up with huge problems. This position opens up the entire Bible to being questioned as to being authoritative, inspired, and trustworthy.

If Paul can't be trusted and erred in his teaching on women, did he also get other parts wrong of the half of the New Testament that he wrote? If Paul was mistaken about women, who knows if what he said about how a man is saved is correct?

I firmly believe that all that Paul wrote was under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit—and thus totally trustworthy. And even though there are some issues that Paul addressed that were possibly local and cultural such as head coverings in Corinth, there is no way a good interpreter of God's Word can say that about his instructions regarding the role and priorities of women.

To do so seriously questions the authority of God's Word. One of the clearest Biblical teachings directed towards godly, Spirit-prompted women of all times is that they, if married, are to be "busy at home". This desire of God is seen consistently in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation.

## What God Does Not Say

When Paul wrote the Holy Spirit's instructions that said married women are to be homemakers **he was not saying that they could do nothing else**. This instruction does not mean that they can never leave the home, be active outside the home, and never have a career. [Proverbs 31:10-27](#) clearly shows the many facets of this wise woman's life and among them were real estate investments (v.16) and a small manufacturing business (v. 24).

Another misapplication of God's instructions are to take them to mean that a woman is to do all the work at home. In fact, as the God-ordained "head of the house" the husband is actually to lead by Christ's example; and Jesus came not to be served but to serve ([Mt. 20:28](#)). So a godly husband will lead the way with a servant's heart ([Phil. 2:7](#)) and all the time give honor to his wife ([1 Peter 3:7](#)) by assisting her in every way he can.

Paul never taught that women were any sort of "second-class" to the men because of this role responsibility. In fact God's Word clearly teaches gender-specific roles in the home (Ephesians 5) and the church (I Timothy 2)—but just as clearly declares absolute spiritual equality in Christ. The same Paul who God led to write [1 Corinthians 11:9](#):

*Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. NKJV*

Also wrote [Galatians 3:28](#):

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. NKJV*

In God's sight the spiritual standing, access, and position of a woman is not different than that of any man. God has no sexual distinctions when it comes to spiritual access.

## What God Does Say

Now that we have established that [Titus 2:5](#)'s "homemaker" role is authoritatively from God, and that it is not imprisonment, slavery, or second-class citizenship to men. What does God say and mean when He says that some women have a God-ordained role to serve Him through?

First this role is defined in Titus as being for married women. This admonition to be taught comes to a woman who is a wife who loves her husband, and a mother who loves her children. So she is obviously to be married.

When Paul was guiding Timothy concerning young widows in the church at Ephesus note what he says in [1 Timothy 5:13-14](#):

*And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. 14 Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully. NKJV*

Paul clearly defines a woman's priorities in order for her as a believer to have spiritual and eternal significance. This is the context of [1 Timothy 2:11-15](#) which says:

*1 Timothy 2:11-15 Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. 12 And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 15 Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control. NKJV*

Paul says that a woman's role in the church is as a learner and not a leader or teacher—that is the gender specific role of the godly men; but her God-ordained gender-specific role if heeded and pursued keeps her from being second rate to the men. If she spiritually follows God's desire to manage a home built around "faith, love, and holiness" she finds her greatest blessing and complete fulfillment from God; and she gets the privilege of rearing children who are God-hearted, useful servants. Any married woman who resists being a grace-energized homemaker works against this divine plan established by the God of the Universe.

Any married woman who wants to do God's will makes her home her priority. That was God's Word, through Paul, to Titus—and by the authority of Scripture to us today. That is what God means by "homemaker". God demonstrates that He allows a great deal of freedom in how this is done (as Proverbs 31 records), but what is vital is that this priority of the home is heeded. Any marriage and home where this priority is neglected is headed for serious problems. No one can violate a specific directive from God without incurring the consequence engine of [Galatians 6:7](#).

## What about a Single Woman?

But what about all the women who are not married, and some who may never be married? Is there no place of special favor and ministry for them? Often it is hard for singles to be around a marriage-focused fellowship, they feel left behind, left out, and even cheated. Often this leads to withdrawal, isolation, morbid introspection, and loneliness. Unchecked all of these responses lead to growing anxiety, frustrations, and even bitterness. That is not God's plan.

My favorite example of a God's plan is a single woman that has taught me more general knowledge of the Bible—than nearly anyone else. Her name is Henrietta Mears. At eight while watching to Billy Graham on TV, I saw him hold up a book and talk about a woman that had immense influence on his life and was one of the greatest Christians he had ever met. [\[2\]](#)[\[2\]](#) Then he explained that she had written in the book he held, all that she had taught through the Christian Education department at Hollywood Presbyterian Church for decades. She guided Billy Graham as he started his crusades and actually trained Bill Bright as a college student in her classes; and was at his home when he founded Campus Crusade for Christ.

Dr. Mears testified later in life that she had met a man who did not have a personal relationship with the Lord, yet wanted to marry her. She waited, prayed, and believed that God wanted her to fully seek and serve Him, which she could never do with this man. After him no other man ever seemed to fit in her heart. She recorded her prayer at this time:

"Lord, You have made me the way I am. I love a home, I love security, I love children, and I love him. Yet I feel marriage under these conditions would draw me away from You. I surrender even this, Lord, and leave it in Your hands. Lead me, Lord, and strengthen me. You have promised to fulfill all my needs. I trust in You alone."[\[3\]](#)[\[3\]](#)

At the end of her life Henrietta testified to the Lord's grace in her life. She described how the Lord gave her more in every way than she ever dreamed. Through her Sunday School ministry she had thousands of children who loved her and in whose lives she poured her life. She said from the day she surrendered to the Lord her future (the prayer above) she never looked back; and God never ceased to open further and further doors of family, friendship, and ministry.

Even though God's Word presents marriage and family life as the major way to fulfillment—it isn't the only avenue. God has designed a road of blessing for every person who surrenders to His will and will follow Him through life. The greatest step is enjoying supremely through life the unwavering companionship of Jesus Christ—the only One that can go through every moment of our life together with us.

## Loving the Ministry God Gave Her

When we see that home management is God's will then we can see how easy it becomes to love what God wants done. First of all, grace-energized homemakers see that managing their home is what God believes is best. That is what Paul said in [Romans 12:2](#):

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. NKJV*

When God's grace helps us resist the pressure of culture, and we set our mind on His plan and will—we live out God's best.

God's best for a married woman is seeing home management as her special ministry plan assigned directly by her Creator and Redeemer; and thereby pleasing the One who called her to that ministry.

Think of the joy it can be to go through life doing **exactly** what God **designed** you to do, **wants** you to do, and **walks** through life giving His **grace** to help you **succeed**.

That is what a grace-energized homemaker has to look forward to—loving the ministry God gave her to do. She can echo Paul's words in [Colossians 3:23-24](#):

*And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men,<sup>24</sup> knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.  
NKJV*

Grace-energized homemakers will never be second-class in their accomplishments for Christ's glory, nor in their eternal rewards.

You can be as great a servant of the Lord as is possible to be in this life by living out your God-given priority of loving your husband and your children through being a homemaker for the Glory of God; and redeeming every moment you spend in the endless duties of your home into worship offerings of obedience to God.

## Appendix: Personal Assessment is Always Vital

If you are a married woman, here is a quick checklist you can use to determine if you may be away from home more than God wants you to be. Or, that your priorities when you are home are not guided by God's Word.

Here's the test: "Because of the pace of my life I am:

- often to tired to plan and cook meals or even keep the house orderly.
- constantly feeling the pressures of never having enough time to finish what needs to be done.
- noticing that my husband is sometimes stressed and troubled over things that are not getting done on time.
- feeling irritated at my children because I am stressed and tired.
- always wanting to eat out and not at home.
- no longer able to show hospitality or even entertain friends in my home.
- slowly losing interest in my homemaking responsibilities.

This is exactly the place of wise and godly mentorship that a grace-energized older woman can bring: coming alongside a younger wife and mother slowly losing interest and even hope in their role as a homemaker. What a vital and godly ministry Titus 2 women can have in Christ's church!

Think of two women, both believers, both wanting to serve the Lord but so different. The first is always on the move from ministry at church to volunteering at school. She sings in the choir, shuttles her children everywhere, attends two Bible studies and teaches Sunday School. One thing she never does is stay home, she is always on the go. Her husband has asked her to please stay home more and keep the house from becoming a disaster.

The other woman is home most of the time. She is lazy, watches TV, sleeps in, and often lets her children get up and get ready for school. At night she's rarely tired, stays up reading or TV watching, but never seems to get any of her projects done that she has agreed to do. Her husband has asked her to please get up, help the children, and get her work done.

Both of these situations are typical among women who know the Lord: the super-woman that is everywhere and does everything but stay home; and the non-super-woman who stays home and never seems to get anything done. Both need to stop and examine their lives to see where they have diverged from God's plan for their priorities.

Wives who are gone from home too much with activities or work can't "keep house" as Titus was told to instruct all women to do. The instruction to the grace-energized homemakers was to "rule or guide the house" **oikodespoteo** in Greek.

When a wife is working or considering entering the workforce she needs to examine what the claims of God's Word are upon her choices. One of the best ways to make the choice about whether to go to work outside the home is to sit next to a godly grace-energized older woman and honestly answer some heart searching questions about what is prompting you to seek work outside the home:

- Is it because I desire more material things?
- Is it because I am tired of the constant demands of caring for my children?
- Is it to make myself into an independent woman that is secured by a career?

None of these reasons after careful examination are God's plan for a grace-energized woman. The clear plan of God for a woman that wants to please the Lord is to be content where God has placed her ([Phil. 4:11](#)), grateful for what possessions are hers ([I Thes. 5:18](#)), and to stay home as much time as it takes ([Titus 2:5](#)) to fulfill her calling from God to maintain a clean and orderly home for her family—all to the glory of God ([I Cor. 10:31](#))

Beware of being the perfectionist that is always dissatisfied with your home so that you can never enjoy it with your family.

## Practical Applications

Our society is increasingly becoming individualistic. This makes everyone a stranger at times, because of our cultural obsessions with privacy. For believers called to community we are to be different. A grace-energized woman who manages her home is also the gatekeeper for hospitality and sets the tone for her home. Peter explained that one of the basic ministries that a grace-energized homemaker can engage in is hospitality.

The New Testament teaches us that not only are we as believers to love one another, we are to

"love strangers" which is the translation of the Greek word for hospitality (1 Peter 4:7-10). Hospitality is going extinct in our privacy guarding, individualism seeking culture. Grace-energized homemakers see that God's will is for believers to open their homes and welcome in those they do not know and extend to them the love of Christ.

This is not a call to enlarge the guest list for entertaining our friends at our homes. Sometimes our entertaining can become a source of pride. We find ourselves wanting to impress our guests with the beauty of our home, and point out all that we have as they look on with admiration. Hospitality never seeks to impress but only seeks to serve. Hospitality whispers quietly in the background to those who are served—what is mine I share with you.

The best manager of the home is the grace-energized homemaker that heeds God's Word calling us to love Christ supremely. That means loving Him more than our home, or possessions. One way to strengthen Christ's supremacy is to de-accumulate our possessions. The more things we own the more complicated our lives become. Things must be sorted, stored, restored, and protected. Most of us could get rid of as much as half of what we own without too much real sacrifice.

The world is constantly trying to infect us with the discontentment-with-what-I-have syndrome that drives the constant cycle of buying more and more stuff. Godly contentment and simplicity are disciplines (1 Timothy 6:9-11) that can free us from becoming ensnared by the "needing more" bug. Simplifying also can help many families from having the need for two incomes to survive.

## Shaping the Atmosphere of Her Home

What are God's guidelines for a grace-energized homemaker? One of the first is in [Proverbs 14:1](#):

The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands. NKJV

This word speaks not merely of the physical structure of the house as a place, but also the reality that it is for people and is to be built into a home. And who does God say builds that atmosphere that makes a house into a home? A grace-energized homemaker. Much like a thermostat regulates the temperature of your house, a godly woman sets much of the emotional and spiritual temperature of the home. When words get heated in the home, a grace-energized woman can give a soft answer "that turns away wrath" ([Proverbs 15:1](#)). When hearts turn cold, a godly wife and mother becomes a conduit of encouragement; as she exhibits the merry heart she encourages "a cheerful countenance" ([Proverbs 15:13](#)). This of course is humanly impossible to maintain, that is why only a grace-energized woman can create this atmosphere in the home.

## Guarding Her Home

If we move on to Proverbs 31 we find a second guideline God gives to help a grace-energized woman with her role as a homemaker. Note [Proverbs 31:27](#):

She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness. NKJV

Here we find a very descriptive word used to describe the home, "watches" is literally "to hedge about" like a mother bird would do to protect her young. This reminds a godly woman that part of her assignment God gave her in the home is to watch over both the house and the people within. This is why the "idleness" is mentioned, it is a constant care implied. The meals, the schedule, the clothes, the health, and so much more are watched, guarded, and done as an offering of worship to the God who called and assigned this highest of duties.

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[1][1] It is very interesting that in the eternal portrait of the godly woman of Proverbs 31, that 9 of the 22 verses are about working in her home.

[2][2] Billy Graham, Introduction to The Henrietta Mears Story, by Barbara Hudson Powers (Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1957), p. 7.

[3][3] Ethel M. Baldwin and David V. Benson, Henrietta Mears and How She Did It (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, Regal Books, 1966), pp. 42-43.

