

The Role of Women



A Self-Study Guide

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In Marriage

TEXT TO READ

1 Samuel 25:2-32

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- 1 What do you find is your greatest challenge as a wife?
- 2 What is one of the greatest joys you experience in fulfilling your duties as a wife (consider your role as a wife only, not as a mother)?
- 3 What was Eve's God given purpose to her husband?
- 4 How did Abigail in 1 Samuel 25:2-32 exemplify this God given purpose?
- 5 One of woman's primary needs is affection while one of man's primary needs is sexual affection. Notice how Paul addresses these needs in 1 Corinthians 7:3-5
- 6 What does it mean to be "submissive without a word?"

APPLICATIONS

- 1 How can you better meet the needs of your spouse and vice-versa from 1 Corinthians 7:3-5?
- 2 What specific things can you do to fulfill your God given purpose to your husband?
- 3 What can you do to be more like Abigail, even if your husband is like Nabal?

KEY TEXTS

1 Corinthians 7:3-5

(3) Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband. (4) The wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. And likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. (5) Do not deprive one another except with consent for a time, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and come together again so that Satan does not tempt you because of your lack of self-control."

Ephesians 5:21-24

(21) Submitting to one another in the fear of God. (22) Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. (23) For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. (24) Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

1 Peter 3:1-6

(1) Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, (2) when they see your respectful and pure conduct. (3) Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair, the wearing of gold, or the putting on of clothing—(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, by submitting to their husbands, (6) as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord. And you are her children, if you do good and do not fear anything that is frightening.

In The Home

TEXTS FOR THOUGHT

Proverbs 25:24- Better to live on a corner of the roof than to share a house with a quarrelsome wife.

Proverbs 27:15- A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day.

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- 1 What do you find is your greatest challenge as a homemaker?
- 2 What is one of the greatest joys you experience in fulfilling your duties as a homemaker?
- 3 What are the various provisions the “worthy woman” makes for the household, according to Proverbs 31:10-31?
- 4 What is the “worthy woman’s” attitude toward her husband? Her children? Her work and role?
- 5 According to Proverbs 14:1, who is the one who makes or breaks the atmosphere of the house? Who is the one who causes the husband or children to succeed or fail?

APPLICATIONS

- 1 What changes can you make to be more like the “worthy woman”?
- 2 What can you do to “build your house?”
- 3 How can you “tear down your house?”
- 4 One way a man receives love is through domestic support. Name specific things you can do to show your love to your husband through domestic support.

KEY TEXTS

Proverbs 31:10-31

(10) A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. (11) Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. (12) She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. (13) She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. (14) She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. (15) She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. (16) She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. (17) She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. (18) She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. (19) In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. (20) She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. (21) When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. (22) She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. (23) Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. (24) She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. (25) She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. (26) She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. (27) She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. (28) Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her. (29) “Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” (30) Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. (31) Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

Proverbs 14:1

The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.

As Parents/Grandparents

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- 1 What do you find is your greatest challenge as a mother/grandmother?
- 2 What is one of the greatest joys you experience in fulfilling your duties as a mother/grandmother?
- 3 Consider the scriptures listed to the right and describe what works God expects from mothers.
- 4 How do you think Timothy was taught by his mother and grandmother, even though he had a heathen (Greek) father?
- 5 Many times mothers point to Ephesians 6:4 as an excuse why they do not take part in the training and discipline of the children. Is this a reasonable argument based upon the Proverbs listed to the right?
- 6 Does a mother take an active role in correction, reproof, discipline, and obedience of a child?

APPLICATIONS

- 1 What must you do to be someone who imparts faith to your children like Lois and Eunice did?
- 2 How can you exert authority with your children so that they will not bring shame upon you as they grow older?
- 3 How can grandmothers participate in upbringing of a child without overruling the authority of the parents?

KEY TEXTS

2 Timothy 1:4-5

“Remembering your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy, clearly recalling your sincere faith that first lived in your grandmother Lois, then in your mother Eunice, and that I am convinced is in you also.”

Genesis 2:24

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.”

Proverbs 6:20

“My son, keep your father’s command, and do not forsake the law of your mother.”

Proverbs 29:15

“The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.”

Proverbs 30:17

“The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it.”

In The Kingdom

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- 1 What do you find is your greatest challenge as a woman laboring in the kingdom of God?
- 2 What is one of the greatest joys you experience in fulfilling your duties as a laborer in God's kingdom?
- 3 Through traditions and misunderstood texts, women have been led to believe that they do not have an active, leading role in the kingdom. Consider the scriptures to the right and discuss all the activities we see the women performing in the first century.
- 4 One important and critical work of women is the teaching of the gospel. Discuss who the women were teaching in the first century. Did they only teach other Christian women?
- 5 Discuss what the older women are to be teaching the younger women. Is this being done by you (e.g. are you teaching other women; do you want to be taught by other women)?
- 6 Does it sound like Phoebe was given authority by Paul (Rom 16:1-2)? Was Phoebe unsubmitive simply because she could instruct others how to help in the kingdom?

APPLICATIONS

- 1 Why is it so important for women to participate in the work of evangelism of unbelievers?
- 2 How can you be a teacher but remain submissive? What attitudes must be present to do this?
- 3 What personal benefits could you enjoy by teaching with another (either husband, sister, friend, etc.) like we see of Aquila and Priscilla?

KEY TEXTS

Romans 16:1-2

"I commend to your Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also."

Acts 18:26

"When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately."

Titus 2:3-5

"The older women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things-that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed."

Luke 8:1-3

"The twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities-Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance."

Romans 16:3-4

"Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles."

1 Corinthians 16:19

"The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Priscilla greet you heartily in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."

Romans 16:6

"Greet Mary, who labored much for us."

In Benevolence

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- 1 What do you find is your greatest challenge in serving?
- 2 What is one of the greatest joys you experience in fulfilling your duties as a servant?
- 3 What do you believe were the “charitable deeds” of Dorcas?
- 4 Why was it important for the kingdom to have women like Dorcas?
- 5 What is impressive to you about the sinful woman in Luke 7:37-38?
- 6 Discuss the meaning of the characteristics given by Paul in 1 Timothy 5:9-10 that describes a true widow, particularly concerning service and benevolence.

APPLICATIONS

- 1 What can you do to be more like Dorcas?
- 2 What opportunities do you have to serve that men do not have?
- 3 What can you do to have the serving heart of the sinful woman?
- 4 What can you do to adopt the Christian character of 1 Timothy 5:9-10?

KEY TEXTS

Acts 9:36-39

“(36) At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Tabitha, which is translated Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and charitable deeds which she did. (37) But it happened in those days that she became sick and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. (38) And since Lydda was near Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. (39) Then Peter arose and went with them. When he had come, they brought him to the upper room. And all the widows stood by him weeping, showing the tunics and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.”

Luke 7:37-38

“(37) And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, (38) and stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears; and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with fragrant oil.”

1 Timothy 5:9-10

“(9) Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, (10) well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.”

In Society/Workplace

TEXT TO READ

Judges 4 & 5

QUESTIONS TO DISCUSS

- 1 What do you find is your greatest challenge as a Christian woman in society/the workplace?
- 2 What is one of the greatest joys you experience in fulfilling your duties as a Christian woman in society?
- 3 What was Esther supposed learn from Mordecai's words?
- 4 What impresses you about what Vashti did? How did she show herself to be a righteous woman?
- 5 What common godly characteristics do you see in Esther, Lydia, and Vashti?

APPLICATIONS

- 1 How can you show a Christian example in the workplace?
- 2 Do you believe there are times when your example will make the difference as to whether your neighbors or co-workers will obey the gospel?
- 3 Have you ever thought that the reason you are at a particular job or neighborhood was to show God's glory?
- 4 How can we apply the example of Vashti to the workplace?

KEY TEXTS

Esther 4:13-14

(13) Then Mordecai told them to answer Esther: "Do not think in your heart that you will escape in the king's palace any more than all the other Jews. (14) For if you remain completely silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

Acts 16:14-15

(14) Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul. (15) And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she constrained us.

Esther 1:9-12

(9) Queen Vashti also made a feast for the women in the royal palace which belong to King Ahasuerus. (10) On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, (11) to bring Queen Vashti before the king, wearing her royal crown, in order to show her beauty to the people and the officials, for she was beautiful to behold. (12) But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command brought by his eunuchs; therefore the king was furious, and his anger burned within him.