

*D GROUP – Life on Life Discipleship for Women of FBC

OUTLINE

Titus 2 for Women, Priority of the Home, Part 2

THE ROLE OF WOMEN - OPENING DISCUSSION:

#1 What are the biggest problems for the woman who has a job outside the home?

#2 What are the biggest problems for the woman who does not have a job outside the home?

#3 Who has been a model for you as a godly woman who truly reflects the “worker at home” quality?

We are looking at the character of godly women from Titus 2 and have focused on her being a **worker at home**. In our last study we saw three major implications of this quality. **First**, the godly woman has a willingness to work hard in the home, where they will have a great impact for God’s glory. **Second**, there will be a strong commitment to make the management of the home her priority, where she finds her purpose in life. **Third**, the home will be a reflection of her godly character, where her great focus is toward her family and what is important in her home. The home is a window into a woman’s heart. We look now at the fourth implication as we seek God’s will in answering questions that are challenging in our society today. What about the implications of the ‘worker at home’ quality for women who are extremely gifted and capable. What does this character trait mean to the woman who could have a successful career if she wanted one? Our desire is to discuss this principle in a loving manner about an issue that is difficult, counter to our culture and in opposition to what is taught in much of America. We are seeking to teach the truth, and teach only what the Bible says, so we all might know God’s heart. So let’s look at the final implication of being a worker at home.

#4 - Accept the heart of God for the woman in the home The phrase “workers at home” is from the Greek words *oikos* (home) and *ergon* (work). But *ergon* (work) does not usually refer to labor in general. It often refers to a particular job or employment. A godly woman is called to focus her life on her home. God has designed the family to be her sphere of influence and her primary place of responsibility. That does not mean she must spend 24 hours a day there. The woman in Proverbs 31 left her home in order to buy a field or when she needed supplies. But those trips away from the home benefited her family. She poured her life into her family. She woke up early and went to bed late for the sake of those in her home. Today, we have many conveniences in our homes that ancient people didn’t have. We don’t have to grind our own grain, spin wool, make our own fabric or go to a river to wash our clothes. Today, workers at home have more time. But women need to be careful to use their time wisely. Having more time does not change the godly woman’s priorities. There may be opportunities to do things that will benefit her home and be helpful to others. The Bible does not explicitly state that women, even those with small children, cannot work outside the home. However, the Bible does say that a woman’s role is to care for the home. Any activity outside the home that keeps her from fulfilling her biblical role in the home is NOT God’s will. **The Bible says it is God’s heart and God’s plan for women to be workers at home.** It has only been in the last 30+ years that we have moved away from God’s clear instruction. Test yourself on this point: Is it God’s will for young Christian mothers to be workers at home? Yes, that is clear. **Is it God’s intent for Christian women to work full-time or even part-time jobs? No. Is it permissible, in certain circumstances? Yes. But that is not the reason for which you were made.** Let me explain. All of the following are biblical absolutes, not outdated cultural positions or personal opinions. These points come from God’s Word, which is God’s will for each of us. In Titus 2:5, a godly woman is described as a ‘worker at home.’

1st-Being a worker at home is not a gray area. God’s design for women to work at home and manage their family is not a gray area, an issue the Scripture does not directly address, nor is it an optional issue that requires the use of general Bible principles to help us decide. No, it is clearly addressed in the Scripture. God tells us He wants women to be workers at home and to manage their household well.

2nd-Being a worker at home isn’t an obscure verse. There is no confusion about what God had in mind when He said women should be workers at home and keep house. Almost all the examples of women in both the Old and New Testaments, show that a woman’s focus should be toward the home. In the New Testament, the truth about the priority of the home for women is addressed twice, here in Titus 2 [a worker at home] and in 1 Timothy 5 [one who keeps house]. There is nothing in the Bible to indicate any other direction for a mother. Nor is there any command for a mother that might set her life in a different direction. God desires a woman to work foremost priority to be her home.

3rd-The clear wording of “worker at home” sets a direction toward the home, not away from the home. It is the clear direction of God’s design for women to be focused primarily and especially on the home. ‘Worker at home’ means to work in, at, through and for the home – to fulfill the qualities of Titus 2; to love your family, love your children, be kind, pure, sensible and subject to your own husband. That’s why discernment about women working outside the home cannot be “maybe,” or “it depends.” It should be “only if...” because God’s clear will for women is to be first and foremost workers at home – your heart is there, your priority is there, your focus & your time is on the home, your husband and your children. Earning income for your family is permissible as Proverbs 31 shows, but ONLY IF your walk with the Lord is strong and your home is in order. ONLY IF your children are under control and you remain available to them as needs arise. ONLY IF your relationship with your husband is sweet, honoring to God and he approves of you working. To have a focus other than the home – whether work, hobby or service – does not remove you from your God-given responsibility at home.

4th-Both ‘worker at home’ and one who ‘keeps house’ have the word “house/dwelling” in them. God’s plan for women’s heart and focus to be geographically centered upon the home. Since both clear statements in scripture give a focus on the home, a woman of God will focus her heart towards her home. Being a worker at home doesn’t mean she is confined to the home or a slave to the home, but that her time and effort are on behalf of her home and family. Her

heart is at home. Her home is her greatest area of responsibility. The home is the place that she is called by God to oversee and manage. The home is where she does her greatest work for God's Kingdom.

5th-To make 'worker at home' optional requires you must make the rest of Titus 2:4-5 optional. If somehow you have come to the conclusion that being a worker at home is an option for your family, then look at the context of this passage. If the character quality 'worker at home' is optional, then it must also be optional for women to love their husbands, love their children, be sensible, pure, kind and submissive to their husbands. You can't isolate one quality as optional, then view the rest as requirements. It is all or nothing. Don't make the fatal mistake of applying the easy principles and rejecting the difficult ones.

6th-Women working outside the home have additional problems to deal with. First is the problem of **priorities**. Titus 2:4-5 teaches women to be sensible; this means she is to know her priorities. What are the priorities a woman should pursue? Her first priority must be to meet the needs of her family. Verses 4-5 state that women are to love their husbands and children and work at home. Clearly these two verses teach a woman's top priority is to care for her home and family. She shows her love for her husband and children by making the home a haven of peace and rest for family, friends and strangers. The second problem of a working mother is one of **authority**. 1 Peter 3:1 says *you wives, be submissive to your own husbands*. When a woman works outside the home, instead of submitting to her own husband alone, now she must also submit to her employer. What happens when her husband wants her to be home on time, but her boss wants her to work late? That is a problem of authority. Who does she submit to in a conflict? A third problem is one of **motive**. The most common reason for both a husband and wife to work outside the home is because they desire an income to maintain a lifestyle. The difference between having enough to live on and wanting more to support a certain lifestyle is one of motive. One motive pursues God's priorities out of a love for Him. The other pursues worldly desires because of love for the things of the world. A fourth problem is that a working woman takes on **another curse**. The woman was cursed in Genesis 3 with the pain of childbirth and relational conflict. The man was cursed with his work becoming difficult and wearying. When a woman takes the man's role of provider, she is taking on part of a curse never intended for her.

7th-Being a worker at home highlights real life situations that are difficult or less than ideal. What should the **single mom who is divorced** do? Well, if your divorce was unbiblical (not due to adultery or due to physical abandonment by an unbeliever), then you need to pursue reconciliation with your spouse. If you are free to remarry, God's Word encourages you to do so. (cf. 1 Corinthians 7). While you wait, remain close to a church body. Become involved, even though it can be hard to do as a single parent. Pray that God will open up opportunities for godly friendships within the church. Allow the body of Christ to be an extension of your own family. Second, what about the **young widow**? **Read 1 Timothy 5:9-14** This passage addresses this situation; the godly older widow is described in a way that shows her top priority has always been her home and family. The heart of the issue remains God's priority of home and family for women. For young widows, remarriage is what God desires for you. It is the place where you will mature in godliness. But never compromise God's standard for marriage—be prudent, not desperate to remarry. The death of your spouse was God's timing; His timing will be perfect in leading you to marriage once again if your heart stays open to the priority of home and family. Give Christ your whole heart while you wait. Third, what about the **husband who wants his wife to work** outside the home, while his wife longs to be a worker at home? Some women face this dilemma when their husbands demand they work outside the home. A tension arises between two biblical principles: God's plan for wives to be a worker at home and submission to their own husbands. If you are in this situation, first begin praying God would sovereignly work in your husband's heart. Then, from correct motives, which are love for your husband, family and love for God—share your convictions with your husband. Let him know obedience to God is what matters to you. Maybe you can find a creative way to work and still be at home, or limit your time away from the home. If all efforts fail to persuade your husband this is God's will, then submit to him and continue praying. And fourth, how can a **couple know if it is God's will for a wife to work** outside the home? The home is where a godly woman lives out her calling as a wife and mother. The issues of home needs to be taken care of ahead of all other matters because the home is the ministry base God created for her. Then how do you wives know whether you should work outside the home? Ask yourself these questions based upon the principles we have uncovered from the scripture. *1-Is your home in order, under control and a model to others? 2-Will it take you from under the authority of your husband? 3-Will it remove you from the domestic obligations of home? 4-Will it involve pure motives? Is your motive to get out of debt? Then maybe you need to work. Is your motive to do ministry—well, perhaps. If your motive is to raise your standard of living or gratify your personal need for significance, then no. 5-Will your family become dependent upon your income? Will getting a job mean trapping yourself? 6-Will it put you in a compromising position as a woman?*

Some women have no choice but to work outside of the home. If this is true of you, it still does not diminish that your home, your husband, and your children should still remain your number one priority and heart focus. Are they?

QUESTIONS for Discipleship Groups

1. Each person, briefly discuss areas of rejoicing and battling of being a Titus 2 woman as we have studied thus far.
2. What work can a mother do if she is **not** working outside the home that cannot be done if she has a job?
3. List some specific advantages a mother has when she is not working outside the home.

4. KEY: How are the changes in focus from last week going? What are the challenges and successes? Spend some time discussing how you can help one another with the challenges.

D group project: 1. Continue implementing changes that you began after the last lesson. 2. Ask someone who knows you how you can improve in this area of your life. 3. Pray specifically for women you know who struggle with this issue because of their life circumstances.

Be diligent to work on the following homework application questions for the 2 weeks between the next d-group meeting.

Women D GROUP Worksheet

Homework Application for Priority of the Home, Part 2

Titus 2:5

Commit to study your notes and prayerfully consider how you might grow in making your home more of a priority.

Who you are at home is who you are.

Day 1

Review the first three implications of the study, Priority of the Home, part 1. Prayerfully consider the willingness, commitment, and reflection of being a godly worker-at-home woman.

Day 2

Do you think our mothers' and grandmothers' generation struggled with this topic as much as we do today? Why or why not? How about the next generation of young women? How will you encourage young ladies to have a heart for home?

Day 3

As women, we are often tempted to find our identity in our accomplishments outside the home. Even if you work or have noble interests outside the home, is it easy or difficult to say you are a homemaker? When you're home, what are you doing?

Day 4

Priority--Home is to be a haven of peace and rest for family and others. Making a haven is hard work, takes time and reduces idleness. How does 2 Thes 3:11-13 apply? 1 Peter 4:15? Does a woman busy at home really have time to be a busybody?

Day 5

Authority--Being employed creates another authority for a woman. How can this stir conflict and confusion in a gal's heart? Can earning and spending her own money cause problems?

Day 6

Motive --The desire for more income may reveal a desire to maintain a certain but unnecessary lifestyle. How would you counsel a young couple who desire to live on one income? Why do they need encouragement? What is sacrificed? Do we deserve to be spoiled?

Day 7

Unmarried young women are encouraged to stay close to the church body and let the body of Christ be an extension of family. If you are single, consider who you want to Titus 2 you regarding the keeping of home. If you are older, consider who you will teach. Pray and then act upon this.

Day 8

Regarding young widows, 1 Timothy 5:9-14, addresses their situation. Do you know young widows who could use an extra measure of love or support? Are you a young widow with needs? Does your church family know these needs?

Day 9

Some women desire to be home more and some women who are home don't work at home as they should. How do you encourage women who might be in a different position than you? Submitting to husbands and prayer are vital aspects for wives who feel torn.

Day 10

How does a couple know if it is God's will for a wife to work outside the home? God's will and God's Word are never separate from each other. Can you work or have projects outside the home while your heart's focus is still for the home? When push comes to shove, what is neglected?