

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 7:2-5
- 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 7:2-5?
- 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 7:2-5

2 But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband. 3 The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. 4 For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. 5 Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control. (ESV)

Ephesians 5:21-24

21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. 22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. (ESV)

1 Peter 3:1-6

1 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word 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 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, by submitting to their own 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. (ESV)

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 were the various provisions the “excellent woman” made 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 “excellent 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 An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. 11 The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain. 12 She does him good, and not harm, all the days of her life. 13 She seeks wool and flax, and works with willing hands. 14 She is like the ships of the merchant; she brings her food from afar. 15 She rises while it is yet night and provides food for her household and portions for her maidens. 16 She considers a field and buys it; with the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. 17 She dresses herself with strength and makes her arms strong. 18 She perceives that her merchandise is profitable. Her lamp does not go out at night. 19 She puts her hands to the distaff, and her hands hold the spindle. 20 She opens her hand to the poor and reaches out her hands to the needy. 21 She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household are clothed in scarlet. 22 She makes bed coverings for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. 23 Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land. 24 She makes linen garments and sells them; she delivers sashes to the merchant. 25 Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she laughs at the time to come. 26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue. 27 She looks well to the ways of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 29 “Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all.” 30 Charm is deceitful, and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her works praise her in the gates. (ESV)

Proverbs 14:1

The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down. (ESV)

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

4 As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy. 5 I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. (ESV)

Genesis 2:24

Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (NKJV)

Proverbs 6:20

My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. (ESV)

Proverbs 29:15

The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother. (ESV)

Proverbs 30:17

The eye that mocks a father and scorns to obey a mother will be picked out by the ravens of the valley and eaten by the vultures. (ESV)

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 you 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. (NKJV)

Acts 18:26

He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him and explained to him the way of God more accurately. (ESV)

Titus 2:3-5

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. (ESV)

Luke 8:1-3

1 Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, 2 and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, 3 and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means. (ESV)

Romans 16:3-4

3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, 4 who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks but all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks as well. (ESV)

1 Corinthians 16:19

The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord. (ESV)

Romans 16:6

Greet Mary, who has worked hard for you. (ESV)

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 Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha, which, translated, means Dorcas. She was full of good works and acts of charity. 37 In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. 38 Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, “Please come to us without delay.” 39 So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Dorcas made while she was with them. (ESV)

Luke 7:37-38

37 And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee’s house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, 38 and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. (ESV)

1 Timothy 5:9-10

9 Let a widow be enrolled if she is not less than sixty years of age, having been the wife of one husband, 10 and having a reputation for good works: if she has brought up children, has shown hospitality, has washed the feet of the saints, has cared for the afflicted, and has devoted herself to every good work. (ESV)

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 reply to Esther, "Do not think to yourself that in the king's palace you will escape any more than all the other Jews. 14 For if you keep silent at this time, relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews from another place, but you and your father's house will perish. And who knows whether you have not come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" (ESV)

Acts 16:14-15

14 One who heard us was a woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple goods, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. 15 And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us. (ESV)

Esther 1:9-12

9 Queen Vashti also gave a feast for the women in the palace that belonged to King Ahasuerus. 10 On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha and Abagtha, Zethar and Carkas, the seven eunuchs who served in the presence of King Ahasuerus, 11 to bring Queen Vashti before the king with her royal crown, in order to show the peoples and the princes her beauty, for she was lovely to look at. 12 But Queen Vashti refused to come at the king's command delivered by the eunuchs. At this the king became enraged, and his anger burned within him. (ESV)