



That they may teach the young women ...

At Home with Usefulness

Leora Schmucker

Greetings in Jesus precious name! Truly we have a Great God who is worthy of all our praise and even our whole lives. Because of His love and mercy to us, we are bound to thank God always! And yet my prayer is that our love among the brethren may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that we would approve things that are excellent; that we would be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God!

It seems we live in a time where there is a lot of confusion concerning God's Word. Things that are acceptable are mixed up with things that are not acceptable (or things that will hinder us from being fruitful). One thing I've been pondering this last while is about the young (and old) sisters working away. I'm not talking about sisters helping other mothers, but rather having outside jobs. So, because of this I decided to do a little research on this topic, and I thought the things I found were interesting and worth sharing with my sisters. Our prayer is that you will be encouraged to continue serving the Lord in the light of His word.

The Bible says ...

Titus 2 :3-5

(3) The aged women likewise, that they may be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

(4) That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

(5) To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.

1 Timothy 5:14

(14) I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.

Here are a couple of key words and their meanings:

Keepers at home—a stayer at home, i.e. domestically inclined (a “good housekeeper”). It also means working at home.

Discreet—prudent; wise in avoiding errors or evil, and in selecting the best means to accomplish a purpose; circumspect; cautious; wary, not rash

Chaste—pure from all unlawful commerce of sexes; free from obscenity; In language, pure, genuine, uncorrupt; free from barbarous words and phrases, and from quaint, affected, extravagant expressions.

Blasphemed—to speak impiously; to use speech to bring down another's value, honor, due-respect; to injure another's reputation in the eyes of others.

“Liberated” from God's way

It is interesting to note that only about 160 years ago it was a very rare thing to have a woman in the workplace, let alone holding government offices. It seems that in the early 1800s many changes started taking place here in the U.S. concerning “women's rights.” It is recorded that as

early as 1848, women in the North began to join the paid workforce to seek higher educational opportunities and to receive a “new sense of selfhood.” These changes began around the time of the Civil War.

During this time many women had to work away because the men were at war. But after the war, many of the women did not want to go back home. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, and Susan B. Anthony were some of the women behind the push for more “rights” for women. Until the late 19th century, women had been excluded from higher education because it wasn’t deemed a necessary qualification for wives and mothers. However, since these changes came around the time of the Civil War, the North and South were still divided afterward when it came to “women’s rights.” The Southern virtue was in danger from the influence of the immoral, outspoken women of the North. The preservers of the Old South put the Southern lady on a pedestal where she would act as

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a preserver of Southern religion and morality, and as an inspiration to her husband and children. The United Confederate Veterans (the South) literally placed young, prominent virgins from each state on a pedestal at their annual reunions to portray the ideal woman who is loyal, obedient, and trusting solely in the protection of their

men. The Southern ideal held that men have public voices while a lady’s influence should extend no further than home and church.

But many things slowly began to change. Beginning in the mid 1800s, our country had its first lady journalist for the Capitol; the first lady holding government office; the first lady to wear bloomers (which were like baggy or loose-fitting pants); the first lady to cut her hair shorter than what was acceptable in society; and finally, women gaining the “right” to vote in 1920.

Usefulness at home

Wow! I’m sure there were other details, but what a major drift in only a few years! A lot of these things seem very far from us, but doesn’t Satan still tempt us mothers with thoughts such as desiring a “sense of selfhood” or “usefulness”? Sometimes maybe we feel we are not doing enough. But are we content to serve our husbands, to raise

our children for the Lord, and guide our homes according to the Word of God? As we can see when the movement started, “women’s rights” began with women just wanting to be in the workplace. But small things quickly turn into large things if they are not addressed. That’s how I see it with allowing our sisters to hold jobs.¹

But all praise to our God, we have the blessed privilege to worship and serve our God without persecution and hindrances. Instead of sisters seeking employment in the general workforce, what about seeking employment by the only true God? If we look around us there are many opportunities to do service for Jesus. Maybe we don’t know what it is God would have us to do specifically. If we don’t, we can go to Him in prayer to seek and know His will. It is His will that we know what our calling is.

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Perhaps we pray one time and God doesn’t answer; then let us pray until He does answer, as with the parable of the persistent widow. Are we persistent? Perhaps we mothers get weary in guiding our homes and desire to do something different? What about rising early and writing a letter to someone needing encouragement? Or, a simple text can quickly brighten someone’s day. What about preparing a meal for someone, or allowing guests to lodge in our homes without complaining? What about being a doctor to our children, or a teacher to them? If you are a keeper at home, you are very privileged because you can have so many occupations!

For the young and single sisters, the opportunities to serve are numerous. The question is, are we 100% willing to lay down our lives for the cause of the kingdom? I do want to bless all of those that are doing these things, but at the same time to challenge those who are not to move ahead to higher ground, to more pure and lovely things. If we are being fruitful in these things, we will not have time for worldly lusts and pleasures. “The friendship of this world is enmity with God.” Remember, whenever we start going away from the truth of God’s Word, things will not turn out right, even if we convince ourselves that they will. ~

¹ I am not referring to a family business where the family is working together to make a living.