

# *Biblical Workers at Home during the Empty Nest and Retirement Years*



by Nikki Ellison

Titus 2:5

Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home...

## **I. The Empty Nest Syndrome**

Definition:

Empty Nest Syndrome refers to feelings of depression, sadness, and/or grief experienced by parents and caregivers after children come of age and leave their childhood homes. This may occur when children go to college or get married. Women are more likely than men to be affected. Often, when the nest is emptying, mothers are going through other significant life events as well, such as menopause or caring for elderly parents. (Psychology Today)

## **A. The Empty Nest from God's Perspective**

### **1. It is a natural occurrence.**

Jeremiah 8:7a

Even the stork in the sky knows her seasons; and the turtledove and the swift and the thrush observe the time of their migration...

Ephesians 5:31

For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.

### **2. God prepares us for the day our children permanently leave home by giving us many firsts:**

Deuteronomy 32:9-12a

For the Lord's portion is His people... Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, that hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. The LORD alone guided him...

Ecclesiastes 3: 1

There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven.

- The beginning of school
- Going to camp, especially the first time
- First night away from home with friends or relatives (without you)
- Obtaining a driver's license and driving away from home the first time
- Leaving for college

## **B. How do we deal with this transition?**

### **1. Be prepared to be bombarded by an array of emotions.**

Nahum 1:7

The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble, and He knows those who take refuge in Him.

### **2. Be positive.**

Colossians 3:15a

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.

### **3. Be careful not to dwell on the ifs, ands, and buts.**

Isaiah 43: 18-19

Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, now it will spring forth; will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.

### **4. Stay busy!**

### **5. Draw from the experience of others.**

### **6. Reconnect with your husband.**

### **7. Depend on God to see you through.**

Isaiah 41:10

Do not fear for I am with you: do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.

## C. Positives of the empty nest to ponder to keep us sane

- Cleaner house
- Less laundry
- Grocery bill reduced
- Fewer dirty dishes
- No more overseeing homework
- More time for personal projects
- Fewer clothes to pack for trips
- Vacations less expensive
- More time to volunteer
- Quieter
- An extra guest bedroom
- More time to connect with friends
- More money after college and marriage!!!



## D. Negatives

- Loneliness
- No longer a tax deduction!!!

## **II. Biblical Workers at Home during Retirement**

### **A. In Relationship to God**

- More time for prayer and concentrated Bible reading

### **B. In Relationship to Husband**

- He is still number one in the home
- Quiet, undisturbed time during family devotions
- More time together working on projects and traveling
- Gardening together for personal needs and meeting needs of others
- Can quietly read together at night.
- More opportunities for ministries together inside and outside the church
- Appreciate him! Appreciate him! Appreciate him!

### **C. In Relationship to children**

II Corinthians 12:14b

For children are not responsible to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.

- Relationship is now on an adult level
- Children seem more inclined to ask and accept advice
- We can be available to offer emotional and Scriptural support when needed and asked
- Be ready and willing to share children after marriage with the in-laws
- Be available! Be available! Be available!

## **D. In relationship to grandchildren**

**We can be involved in a multitude of activities in order to establish a long lasting relationship with our grandchildren.**

Psalm 145:4

One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts.

- Reinforce their spiritual and educational training
- Love them! Love them! Love them!



## **E. In relationship to myself**

Colossians 3: 23-24

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

- Important to keep a schedule
- Now is the time to complete long standing projects –Clean those closets!!!
- Declutter! Declutter! Declutter! E-bay, Craig's List, and Alumni Yard Sale excellent way to purge
- Sign up for TOP classes for fun activities
- Be aware of financial matters in the home
- Be available to volunteer
- Preserve history of family through photos, scrapbooks, and diaries
- Make time for friends
- Prepare to leave your loved ones
- Enjoy life! Enjoy life! Enjoy life!

Psalms 71: 17-18

O God, You have taught me from my youth, and I still declare Your wondrous deeds. And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to all who are to come.

Isaiah 46:4

Even to your old age I shall be the same, and even to your graying years I shall bear you! I have done it, and I shall carry you; and I shall bear you and I shall deliver you.

## **Sources Consulted:**

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