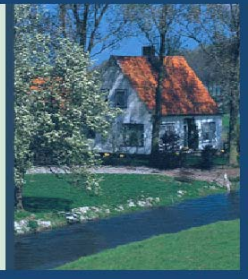


Workers at Home Priorities



by Jan Patterson

Blessed is that slave, whom His master
finds so doing when He comes.
~Matthew 24:46

I. Our Stewardship - Matthew 24:45-46

- A. Home and family. Titus 2:4-5 tells us we are to, among other things, be “workers at home.”
- B. I Timothy 5:14 – we are to “keep house.”

II. Meanings

- A. “Workers” is from a root simply meaning “action.”
- B. “At home” – the sphere and center of our stewardship
- C. “Keep” carries the meaning of being the **master** of the house, the “ruler of our realm.”
- D. Are you diligently active in your house? Do you find your satisfaction and sense of fulfillment in “housewifing?” In taking care of your realm and overseeing all that goes on there? This is your stewardship and God Himself “blesses” us, as it says in Matthew. He gives us happiness in it, as the word “blessed” means.

“The beauty of the home is ORDER. The blessing of the home is CONTENTMENT.” ~Henry Van Dyke

III. Workers

A. Proverbs 31 – our example of diligence

1. A neat and clean home. Why is this important?
 - a. _____ is sinful. (many Proverbs, also Rom. 12:11, and II Thes. 3:10-12)
 - b. _____ is unsettling and creates tension. The Lord loves, and the Bible teaches – _____ Creation, the details of the Mosaic Law, I Cor. 14:40, where the word “orderly” means “properly arranged.”
 - c. Not perfectionism – and it can be discouraging and distracting to others, and it can cause us to forget that **family is more important than cleaning standards**.

2. Food
 - a. Nowadays our “four food groups” seem to be fast, microwave, instant, and ready-made.
 - b. You are growing _____ – put good fuel in them, at appropriate intervals. Put your money in **nutrition**, not highly processed foods, as much as you can.
 - c. It isn't just a cute saying that “the way to a man's heart is through his stomach.” It's too true! A man and children **love** to come home to a house with good food smells.

3. Clothing
 - a. Her family is well-clothed, but that doesn't mean it has to be costly – just available and appropriate, like nourishing food.
 - b. This, and food, and basic order and cleanliness give security to your family. *And security breeds _____.

4. Ministry to others is included in this “list” of homemaking skills in our model. It requires sacrifice. It isn’t often convenient, but we are commanded to, in love, serve one another, and help to meet the needs of our fellow Christians as well as minister to the lost. Not only are we commanded to, but it is also necessary as an example to your children of service.
5. This woman obviously did some kind of outside work. Her sphere of activity is obviously centered in her home. If you are working a job in addition to being a homemaker, then:
 - a. It must be by God’s design.
 - b. You need special grace to keep up with your home and family, which He has **promised to give** – I Cor. 10:13, II Cor. 12:9.
 - c. In your thoughts and in your desires and in your **heart**, your home and family are first. Your job, like your home and family, are part of the stewardship the Lord has given you.

B. “At Home”

1. This sphere – “at home” – is to be for all of us, our satisfaction, our _____
2. If the Lord allows it, as a rule, try to be “at home” when your children are. Even teens sense stability and security when Mom is a fixture, and if you **enjoy** being home.
3. Be a _____! God wants us to be.

“Their home is to be their kingdom” ~Lenski on Titus

IV. "Manage the Home," or "Rule the Realm"

A. What does a ruler do?

1. Sets the tone and atmosphere
 - a. Proverbs speaks of the goodness of a merry heart, cheerfulness, and industry; New Testament verses remind us to sing to the Lord with gratitude in our hearts (Col. 3:16) and we are also told in the Bible to speak of Him and His wonderful works, and praise Him for His goodness; _____ even help 😊 (Prov. 27:9); we need to promote the fruits of the Spirit – love, joy, peace, etc.
 - b. Example, example, example – three most important things about setting the tone.
2. Meets the needs of, protects and nurtures the "subjects"
 - a. _____ the home against unhealthy outside influences, and be watchful to protect our family from **their own** "inventions of evil."
 - b. Security comes from Mom's presence, and order, and physical needs consistently met. But we are to also to meet their spiritual / emotional needs. – love (acceptance), trust, wisdom, etc.
 - c. Relationships are most important
3. Oversees the work/manages the affairs of the realm.
 - a. Focus on the basics
 - b. Know your priorities

"In domestic affairs I defer to Katie; in all other matters I am led by the Holy Ghost." ~Martin Luther

V. *A Word about Priorities*

- A. Sometimes the load becomes overwhelming – possible reasons:
1. You may need help with _____ management (But maintain flexibility.)
 2. You may not be following **God's** agenda for you.
- B. “Seasons of Life” – as our children age, and other changes come our way
1. Exceptional “seasons” – SIMPLIFY. (And remember that people are more important, and your house and your cleaning standards and your projects and all those other demands will be there waiting for calmer times.)
 2. Refocusing – assess your priorities.
 - a. Is your relationship with the Lord progressing?
 - b. Are you serving your husband, and able to love him as you ought?
 - c. Are you a **joyful** mother of children (Psalm 113:9) and meeting their basic needs?
 - d. Are you maintaining your own body as the temple of the Holy Spirit?
 - e. Are you able to “rule your realm” with a measure of peace and contentment?
 3. Sometimes something has to go.
 - a. Consult your husband
 - b. “Priorities are made in prayer” – study your _____ – what must be done, what could be cut away, altered or simplified.
 - c. Learn to delegate
 - d. Learn to say “No” – **how** as well as when

- D. What about when your family's lives get busier, more diverse?
1. So many good opportunities
 2. Maintain routine and being at home, even if it feels like Grand Central, which it will!
 3. Teach **them** to establish priorities, and the ability to choose the best, and to say No. (There are times when they have to learn: "I really want to do this, and all my friends are, and it is good . . . but it's okay **not** to.")
- E. Final reminder – our American culture today is very _____-oriented, not _____ oriented. Be careful of defining "godliness" in purely cultural terms, and it will help you maintain perspective.

Conclusion:

What will cause you to look back at your life with gratitude and satisfaction? That you obeyed and loved what God had for you in each "season" and each day. That you loved your God, your family, and others. For **that**, your true stewardship, you will give account – your **HEART** and how you enjoyed and gave yourself to the "office" of a keeper of your home. So "magnify your office," and may we all be worthy of a humble phrase on the tombstone of another virtually unknown but godly woman buried in Africa,

"having served [her] generation according to the will of God"
(from Acts 13:36, KJV)

*Ways to Measure Your Focus
when Considering a Ministry Outside the Home*

1. Do you always have to shove husband and children aside to fulfill some ministry project?
2. Do you often shift responsibilities to someone else? (Husband real handy to do things you can't get done)
3. Do you find it irritating when you have to meet the needs of your family?
4. Do you find yourself so preoccupied that you aren't aware of the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of your family? (There will be times when this occurs, but is it characteristic of your life?)
5. Are you too busy to love and discipline your children?
6. Are you so distracted that you cannot emotionally enjoy your family?
7. Is your family a burden? Does it keep you from doing what you always wanted to do?

~Linda Minnick, lecture on *Balancing Homemaking with Other Responsibilities*

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