

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION I - PERSONAL LIFE

Lesson One

BIBLICAL FOUNDATION

INTRODUCTION

How does a lady determine what she should and shouldn't do? There are many "Christian" teachers and writers who try to impose their own personal beliefs upon everyone simply because an applied principle appeared to work for them. In recent years, the majority of books written for Christian women are not based on the Scripture. Instead the teachings are based on experiences, feelings or what the author accepts as 'truth' from the world's teachings. Every Christian lady needs to recognize the Bible as God's Word and as the only **true** foundation on which she is to build her Christian life.

I. A Christian lady determines all absolutes from the Word of God, the Bible.

A. The Bible is God's absolute word. II Timothy 3:16-17, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." The scripture was given to Christians as God's only absolute way of knowing God's instructions for life. There are many books written by good people, but only one book written by God. A Christian lady needs to govern all her actions by the Bible and subject all other sources of information to God's book. She should ascertain the worthiness of all written or spoken materials by THE book.

B. A Christian lady willfully accepts the Bible as her authority.

1. It is the only absolutely correct Book. It is the source to learn about Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior, and His eternal life. John 5:39, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and

they are they which testify of me.” The Scriptures tell about Christ and His relationship with all mankind, whether saved or lost.

2. Failures in life are a result of not knowing or not following the Word of God. Mark 12:24, ““And Jesus answering said unto them, Do ye not therefore err, because ye know not the Scriptures, neither the power of God?” The greatest deficiency in life is not physical, but spiritual, resulting from failure to know and apply the Bible to life.
3. Earthly authors are not restricted to absolute truth and generally add their personal beliefs and feelings. The Bible does not contain the personal feeling or beliefs of the people who wrote the words, but it is the pure word of God Himself. II Peter 1:21, ““For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”
4. God does not give the right to anyone to interject their personal feelings or beliefs into their teachings if they declare it to be absolute. All Christian teaching should be absolute truth and, consequently, based on the Bible. II Peter 1:20, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.” When a teacher adds his or her own interpretation to God's Word, making it say what he wants it to say, he is violating the instructions of the Scriptures.

II. A Christian lady must have a personal relationship with God.

Once a Christian lady instills in her heart that every truth comes from the Word of God, she must understand that a personal intimate relationship between her and the Lord is one of the most important steps in life. The Lord knows everything about each one of His daughters and accepts her because she is His child. Every Christian lady needs to understand her position in Christ and be honest with herself by **accepting her godly identity. *Understanding who she is in Christ will give her confidence in Him as well as knowing that she is very important to God. When she comprehends that this relationship with Christ is THE most important truth in a Christian's life, she will see an immediate change in all her actions.***

- A. A relationship is the state of being connected, belonging, working together, or

being of the same kind. God has an ongoing relationship with each of His children and His daughters are very important to Him. God explains His relationship in the Bible in different ways.

1. God is her **Father**. Matthew 6:31-33, “Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for **your heavenly Father** knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” Luke 11:13, “If ye then, being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall **your heavenly Father** give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” God has said that He knows the needs of His children and promised to provide for them. It is a great comfort to know that God is in charge, that He cares, and that He provides for every one of His children.
2. God **loves her**. I John 4:9-10, “In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that **he loved us**, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.” Revelation 1:5. “And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him **that loved us**, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” It is an awesome reality to know that God loves His children without prejudice or partiality. **God is with His children at all times no matter what they are going through**. Jesus brought God's love to humanity through the shedding of His blood to wash away all sins. A Christian lady does not have to worry about God ending His love toward her because His love is guaranteed in Jesus Christ. Romans 8:35,38,39; “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor

depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

3. God is **faithful to her**. I Corinthians 10:13, "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but **God is faithful**, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, ***I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.***"

II Timothy 2:13, "If we believe not, ***yet he abideth faithful***: he cannot deny himself." God has promised that He will never leave nor forsake His children and is always faithful to them. There are times of sin when a lady might be unfaithful to God, but God will never be unfaithful to her. No matter what happens in a Christian's life God is always there and makes a way for a Christian to continue in God's way.

4. God **cares for her**. Psalms 139:1-24. God knows everything about a Christian lady's life and still loves and cares for her.

B. A Christian lady's relationship to God is determined by how she recognizes God. God wants each of His daughters to have an active ongoing relationship with Him, never violating that relationship and never departing from Him. Every good father wants his daughters to love and communicate with Him.

1. Every saved person is a child of God and Christian ladies **should respond to God as one of His dear children**. John 1:12-13, "But as many as received him, ***to them gave he power to become the sons of God***, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Romans 8:14-17, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, ***they are the sons of God***. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with

him, that we may be also glorified together.”

Many times a girl becomes ungrateful and prideful and refuses to ask her parents for the needs she has in her life. She wants to function on her own (just like Eve did). ***Many times Christian ladies fail because they do not seek from their heavenly Father the needs of their lives.*** It is crucial for a Christian lady to know that God is her Father and take appropriate actions in trusting Him for all of life’s needs.

There is a false teaching today that says a woman cannot understand God if she did not have an earthly father as a proper example. A Christian lady does not have to look to her earthly father to know the character of God. She has the Bible and Jesus Christ to show her what her godly Father is like.

2. A Christian lady must recognize her need to love the Lord and also realize the results of failing to love Him. I Corinthians 16:22, “If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha.” The word ‘anathema’ means to ban or excommunicate a person from the church. God instructed the church at Corinth to remove a person from their membership if they did not love the Lord. A Christian lady must realize that she can not be a part of the work and action of God unless her love for the Lord is present and active. If a Christian lady does not love the Lord she is doomed to fail, disqualified as a part of God’s ministry and unworthy of the name Christian.

III. A Christian lady must recognize the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Lordship is the process of recognizing and accepting that Jesus Christ is the Lord (king, ruler, authority, sovereign, monarch). Jesus is God and sits in the seat of judgement where everyone will give account for their life. There are some that teach if Jesus is not recognized as Lord of all then He is not their Lord. This is an incorrect teaching because someday every human being will bow before Him, acknowledging Him as the Lord, whether or not they believe that.

- A. When a Christian lady ***recognizes and accepts*** Jesus as her Lord, she will give Him first place in her life. This means that ***He is first over*** her

husband, her children, her parents, her employer, or anyone else in her life. Romans 14:8, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, ***we are the Lord's.***" I Corinthians 8:6, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, ***by whom are all things, and we by him.***" **If anything or anyone else is above the Lord, it is an idol.** Deut. 5:7, "Thou shalt have none other gods before me."

- B. When a Christian lady individually accepts and recognizes that Jesus is her Lord she is to ***proclaim*** that Jesus is her Lord. Philippians 2:11, "And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
- C. When a Christian lady accepts and recognizes Jesus as her Lord she is to ***submit (give)*** herself to Him. II Corinthians 8:5, "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."

IV. **A Christian lady must live her life by faith in Jesus Christ.**

There is a whole chapter of the Bible dedicated to recognizing those who lived their lives by faith. In Hebrews eleven there are three ladies listed: Sara, Moses' mother (parents), and Rahab. This verifies that God recognizes the faith of women just as much as men.

- A. A Christian lady's faith and works (of faith) are recognized by God.
 - 1. A Christian lady should know what is not of faith is sin. Romans 14:23, "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for ***whatsoever is not of faith is sin.***"
 - 2. A Christian lady is to live her life by faith. Romans 1:17, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, ***The just shall live by faith.***"
 - 3. A Christian lady will be blessed according to her faith. Matthew 9:28-29, "And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying,

According to your faith be it unto you."

4. A Christian lady will not fail if she lives by faith. II Corinthians 1:24, "Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but are helpers of your joy: for ***by faith ye stand.***"
 5. A Christian lady who lives by faith will not be destroyed by the attacks of the world. Ephesians 6:16, "Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ***ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.***"
 6. A Christian lady receives her salvation through faith. Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye ***saved through faith***; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"
- B. A Christian lady should have faith in the Lord for her personal needs. Matthew 6:30, "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, ***shall he not much more clothe you***, O ye of little faith?"
- C. A Christian lady gets her faith from the Word of God. Romans 10:17, "So then ***faith cometh by hearing***, and hearing ***by the word of God.***"
- D. A Christian lady's actions are controlled by her faith; a lost woman's actions are controlled by the law. Galatians 3:22-26, ""But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But ***before faith came, we were kept under the law***, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

CONCLUSION

There are many paths a woman can follow in the course of her life, but only one that will glorify Christ. That pathway is laid out in the Bible. It is easy to follow a book written on how to be a Christian lady but fail to recognize there has only been one perfect book written by a perfect person, the Lord God Almighty. Why would anyone settle for less than the best

when the best is available? Every Christian lady is to choose the Bible as her guidebook and conform her life to what the Bible says.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Hebrews 13:5

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

EVE

Read Genesis 2:18-3:24; II Corinthians 11:1-3; II Tim 2:13-15

Eve is an example of failing to adhere to God's word. As a result she brought sin upon all her descendants.

- A. Genesis 2:18, 21-25. God created Eve to be a helper to Adam. When the serpent deceived her into eating fruit from the forbidden tree, she chose to **operate alone** without seeking her husband's counsel or God's guidance. This violated God's plan and purpose and resulted in failure.

Question: When you are confronted with such a decision, what choices do you make? Do you follow God's Word and authority or do you make decisions on your own using your own judgement? How did you arrive at this answer?

_____.

- B. God created Eve from Adam and placed her in a position of help meet to help Adam accomplish the instructions God had given him.

Question: What happens if you do not accomplish the purpose for which God created you and how will it affect others?

_____.

- C. Eve did not recognize every word of God as absolute and accepted from the serpent a perverted explanation of His words.

Question: When others try to explain away the Bible and teach you to follow some other teaching, what decision do you make? What do you follow and what is the usual result?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE: WOMAN AT THE WELL

Read John 4:3-43

The woman at the well was a sinner with little or no hope until she met Jesus. When He explained to her the plan of God, she accepted it. Most of the time when a person recognizes the bondage of sin, she will immediately and sincerely reach out to Christ and His Word.

- A. The woman at the well accepted the words Jesus spoke to her and as a result she was saved.

Question: Do you accept the Bible, the Word of God, as God's absolute authority and strive to follow its instructions? How does this decision affect you on a daily basis?

- B. After the woman at the well accepted Christ and His word, she immediately went and told others about Jesus and what He had done for her.

Question: Have you taken a stand for Jesus Christ by telling others? How do you show the delight you have in your salvation?

- C. The woman at the well is recorded in history, not because of her sin, but because of her obedience to the word of God.

Question: When your name is mentioned now or in the future what is it associated with: sin or obedience to God's Word? What do you think others say?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION I - PERSONAL LIFE

Lesson Two

DEFINING A CHRISTIAN LADY

INTRODUCTION

Modern 'politically correct' business grammar states that it is improper to refer to a female as a lady. It says she should be referred to as a 'woman' which encompasses every female. It states that the word lady shows prejudice and elevates one female above another. Today's society is losing the distinction of certain women being examples of appropriate behavior and appearance. Being a lady implies a different lifestyle from the sinful world. Much of modern day teaching tries to convince women to conform to their surroundings and not live a life separated unto the Lord. Even in Christian circles, there is less and less emphasis on saved women being Christian ladies. If young women do not have Christian examples to follow, they will conform to the world and be like its ruler. Ephesians 2:2, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"

Many times when the word 'lady' is used in today's society it is used in a derogatory way to imply that a woman thinks she is better than her peers. There needs to be a renewal of the realization that Christian women should be ladies; they should be **examples of excellence and Christian leadership**. This lesson is to help each woman know what God expects of His daughters and how they can develop their lives in Christ to become **Christian ladies**.

I. A Christian lady in the Bible.

II John 1, 5, "The elder unto the elect lady and her children, whom I love in the truth; and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth;" "And now I beseech thee, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that

which we had from the beginning, that we love one another." The word lady appears only twice in the Bible and both times are in the book of II John. John writes to a "set apart" mother and homemaker and refers to her as the elect lady. The word lady used in these verses means a "Christian woman; supreme in authority". The name of the elect lady is not given in the Bible, but the **recognition of her lifestyle elevated her to distinction and respect**. Others looked to her for direction in how to live godly lives.

The word lady is used to refer to a specific lifestyle. When it is used in the Bible, as well as in the English language, the word indicates certain characteristics:

- A. The word 'lady' implies one with refinement and gentle manners. (ladies and gentlemen)
- B. The word 'lady' implies one with high morals.
- C. The word 'lady' implies a certain standard of dress.
- D. The word 'lady' is associated with using correct language and avoidance of vulgar or crude words.
- E. The word 'lady' identifies a special type of woman who has a deep motive for living that goes beyond selfishness.

II. **A Christian lady's personal hygiene.**

There is an old cliché which says "cleanliness is next to godliness". This is not found in the Bible, but people think along this line. A dirty person is perceived as ungodly and one who does not care about Christ or others. It is essential that a woman who wishes to be classified as a Christian lady practice good personal hygiene.

- A. Before the Lord came down from Mount Sinai to meet with the children of Israel he gave instructions to Moses that the people wash their clothes and be clean when they met with Him. Exodus 19:10-11, "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai." God wants His people to show proper respect to Him by being clean.
- B. Ruth was instructed to wash and prepare herself to meet with Boaz. Ruth 3:3,

"Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor: but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking." Being physically clean is associated with

pureness and godliness. By being clean Ruth demonstrated to Boaz that she was a person separated and seeking to please him.

- C. The Pharisees would not eat unless they had washed their hands. Mark 7:3, "For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders." There are several chapters in the book of Leviticus regarding washing and keeping clean indicating that the Jews took regular baths as part of being God's people. Being clean coincides with the putting off of the world and being separated to God.
- D. The scribes and Pharisees were told to clean the inside and not just the outside. They were not condemned for cleaning the outside but for failing to also clean the inside. Matthew 23:25-26, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also."

III. A Christian lady's appearance.

The Bible is the standard by which Christian women should fashion themselves. God shows that appearance is important to Him since He made reference to it in His Word. There are people who ignore the Bible and teach that a Christian woman can dress any way she likes and it is acceptable. There are others who teach that women are restricted to the extent they are not to wear anything that is fashionable and, specifically, only wear clothing with skirts. They base this teaching on Deuteronomy 22:5 "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God."

The word abomination means *to despise* or *something disgusting*, such as an idol. **This verse is clearly dealing with the appearance of homosexuality.**

It discusses women dressing like men and men dressing like women. There are some women today who dress in the same clothes as men because they do not want to be women. There is a difference between men's clothing and women's clothing. This verse does not say women cannot wear slacks; it says women should not wear clothing that makes them appear as men. When a female is seen, any time or anyplace, **she should not have her gender questioned.** Everyone should know she is a woman by the clothes she wears.

- A. One of the best verses in the Bible to understand how a Christian lady should dress is I Timothy 2:9, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;"
1. "Adorn themselves" means to put in proper order; to decorate. A Christian lady needs to understand that what she wears is an indication of what she is inside. Clothing is not only her outside adornment, but it shows others what is inside (**it should show her soul, not her body**).
 2. "Modest apparel" means orderly arrangement. Modest apparel does not mean conservative apparel but **appropriate apparel**. Certainly a Christian lady should dress conservatively, but for a different reason than what some people say this word means. She should dress conservatively to **keep from drawing negative attention to herself (body) and to honor Christ with her appearance**. Christian ladies should wear clothing that are **appropriate for whatever occasion she is attending**.
 3. "With shamefacedness" means bashfulness; modesty. A Christian lady should dress to show that she is submitted to the Lord Jesus Christ. Everything she wears should show others Christ, not show off her body or draw attention to her individuality (clothed with humility). I Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." *Her physique is not the issue; pounds or inches are not the issue; **who***

*she is internally and **whom** she represents is the real issue.*

4. "Sobriety" means soundness of mind; in control. A Christian lady should dress with a clear mind, not by her feelings. II Timothy 1:7, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." A Christian lady should always take other people into consideration and what their reaction will be to her dress. Will others react positively or negatively? Will they react spiritually or carnally? Will they be impressed or disgusted? Will she be accepted or rejected? If the Lord Jesus Christ escorted her, would He be pleased with her attire?
5. "Not with broided hair" means not with braided hair. A woman's beauty does not come from putting her hair up on her head, but by adorning herself **according to what she is in her heart**. A Christian lady should not be a hypocrite and put on **just** an outward appearance, but she should make sure her **heart** is right, and then she will dress appropriately. I Peter 3:3-5, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:" It is very important that a Christian lady have well kept hair, but not hair that would detract from whom she should be representing.

- B. God cares about what a lady wears and promised that He would provide her clothes to wear. Matthew 6:29-31, "And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?"

Every saved woman has a heavenly Father who cares about her needs

and desires. Nothing is too small or too insignificant to talk about with Him. It is important to Him that His children have the right clothes for a job, or a special dress for a special occasion. Psalms 37:4-5 "Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." God wants His children to always be appropriately dressed and He will provide whatever they need.

- C. Public nakedness has always been associated with sin and the devil. Luke 8:27, "And when he went forth to land, there met him out of the city a certain man, which had devils long time, and ware no clothes, neither abode in any house, but in the tombs." A Christian lady should always dress appropriately to represent Christ and not dress carnally (relating to or given to crude bodily pleasures and appetites, sexual) which represents the world and its god, the devil. When a lady chooses her clothing she should ask herself the following questions: **what kind of message are these clothes going to send to others? Would these clothes be appropriate if she met Jesus, whether she is at home, the office, church, or at school.**

IV A Christian lady's language.

It is very important that Christian ladies watch what they say and make sure that every word they speak shows respect to God. Matthew 12:35-37, "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned." Every person will give account to God for the words that come out of their mouths. God places great importance upon what is said so ladies are to be careful of every word spoken.

- A. A Christian lady should always be careful what words she speaks because what she says affects others and their lives. Psalms 141:3 "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Proverbs 16:23-24, "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. Pleasant

words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones.”

- B. A Christian lady who has control of her tongue is a perfect lady. One of the marks of being a lady is whether or not a woman can control her tongue. James 3:1-11, James 3:2, "For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body." The word perfect means to be finished or complete. A mature Christian lady is one who has control of her tongue at all times.
- C. A Christian lady needs to recognize several things the Bible says about the use of the tongue.
1. A Christian lady should never speak uncontrolled words and particularly those spoken in anger. She should think before she speaks. James 1:19, "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath;" Proverbs 17:27-28, "He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit. Even a fool, when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise: and he that shutteth his lips is esteemed a man of understanding." I Thessalonians 4:11 "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;" It is very important that a Christian lady knows when to speak and when to be quiet.
 2. A Christian lady needs to know that words of contention (arguing trying to gain a position of authority over another) can cause dissention and division. I Corinthians 1:10, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." Proverbs 27:15, "A continual dropping in a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike." Contention has destroyed many marriages, families, friendships, churches, and even caused division in the work force.
 3. A Christian lady should speak the truth with a motive of love. Loving God and loving others is the greatest controller of the tongue. **Love**

determines what and how something is said. Ephesians 4:15, "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:" Love causes a person to think of others rather than self. It causes one to think of others' needs and rights. *Loving others makes them more important; it causes giving rather than receiving, and it motivates serving rather than ruling.*

4. A Christian lady should not lie no matter what the circumstances or justification. Ephesians 4:25, "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another." A Christian lady should verify what she is saying to make sure of its accuracy. It is important to communicate what actually happened. Therefore, she should listen **with her ears and mind, not just with her emotions.** When people listen with just their emotions, it distorts what was actually said, resulting in an inaccurate understanding of what was said or done. Proverbs 18:13, "He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."
5. A Christian lady should not speak words that corrupt or slander. She should not speak with a loud continuous voice intending to cause pain or injury to others. Ephesians 4:31, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and *clamour*, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:" Proverbs 9:13 "A foolish woman is clamorous: she is simple, and knoweth nothing." Clamor (noise, uproar, disorder) will destroy a Christian testimony as quick as anything a lady can do.
6. A Christian lady should not speak words that are worthless or rotten. Ephesians 4:29, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers." When a woman speaks without moral guidelines, it is evident she does not care what others think of her or her Lord.
7. A Christian lady is not to get involved in dirty or coarse language. Colossians 3:8, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice,

blasphemy, *filthy communication* out of your mouth.” Dirty or foul communication is usually identified by the use of unacceptable four letter words.

- D. A Christian lady should not be idle because it can easily lead to tattling and being a busybody (speaking things which should not be spoken).

I Timothy 5:13-14, "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not. I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." What a woman says gets her into more trouble than anything else she does. Proverbs 21:23 "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." A Christian lady knows to spend her extra time serving God and others instead of getting involved in idle talk (gossip).

V. **A Christian lady's conduct.**

A woman's action says a lot about her. There are many things about behavior that could be examined from laziness to diligence, from slowness to zealousness, from apathy to ministry, and many more. Christian ladies should realize their actions influence others and their judgment of her. Everyone makes determinations about other peoples' character according to what they see, whether right or wrong.

- A. A Christian lady has no condemnation from God (because of her salvation) and should walk in her new life. Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." If a woman walks in the flesh God does not condemn her, but others will condemn her because her actions are not Christian actions. When a Christian lady walks according to her flesh others also condemn her Lord. **She is not the issue, her Lord is.**
- B. A Christian lady should put on Jesus Christ and walk honestly as a child of light. Romans 13:12-14, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in

chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the
 Lord

Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.”

A

Christian lady should never walk in:

1. Rioting and drunkenness, (fighting, brawling, and inebriation)
2. Chambering and wantonness (staying in bed and being promiscuous)
3. Strife and envying. (contention and jealousy)

A Christian lady should cast off the works of darkness and be a light to a
 world

that is blind and lost. A Christian lady should show her Lord to others
 through
 her actions.

- C. A Christian lady is to walk by faith determining her actions by God and His Word, not by the circumstances and events of life. II Corinthians 5:7, "(For we walk by faith, not by sight☺)" She should respond to any event that happens **based on who she is and where she is going, not by what has happened to her. She should walk looking forward, not backward.**
- D. A Christian lady recognizes that before she was saved she walked the way of the world. But after her salvation she is to walk as a **new creation**, created in Christ Jesus. Ephesians 2:1-10, (verse 2)"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:" (verse 10) "For we are his workmanship, **created in Christ Jesus unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." A Christian lady is not to look back at the muck and mire of the world which she walked in the past. Some that knew her may then accuse her, stating that she is a sinner or no better than them, but she must remember she is changed.
- E. A Christian lady does not walk the way other gentiles walk. The lost world walks in the vanity of their minds. Ephesians 4:17, "This I say therefore, and

testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind," (vain - empty or profitless). What the world sees as important is only empty and has no value with God. At the end of life every earthly or temporal thing that was done will end (whether it was good or bad). Nothing from this earth can be taken to heaven.

F. A Christian lady should determine each step she is going to take in life and wisely follow the direction given to her by God. A Christian lady should take time to pray, read her Bible and think! Ephesians 5:15, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise," (circumspectly-exactly or straight). If a woman does not determine her direction someone else will determine it for her.

G. A Christian lady should not go on the same path with those who are insubordinate and live disorderly. II Thessalonians 3:6, "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." A Christian lady should always be careful not to attach herself to those who claim to be Christian but do not follow the teachings of the Bible.

VI. **A Christian lady's time.**

Time is a very precious commodity and should never be wasted. Everyone has the same amount of time; whether they have an important job or are unemployed; whether they are young or old; whether they are rich or poor. Christian ladies need to be very careful with their time and use it to glorify Christ.

A. A Christian lady is to redeem her time. To redeem is like taking a coupon to the grocery store to trade for a product. A Christian lady should trade her time for the eternal rewards of God. Ephesians 5:16, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

B. A Christian lady who is redeeming her time needs to show wisdom in dealing with the lost and not waste the time God has given her. The world tries to consume all of a Christian lady's time in order to keep her from doing the things God asks of her. Colossians 4:5, "Walk in wisdom toward them that

are without, redeeming the time."

- C. A Christian lady is going to be judged by God according to how she spent her time here on this earth. Her works will be judged in accord with the time given to her by God. I Peter 1:17, "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:"

CONCLUSION

Life is a very precious thing and how it is lived is of great importance. A saved woman should choose to walk as a Christian lady and represent Jesus Christ all her life. A saved woman should place in her heart a burning desire to be a Christian lady and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. She should show respect for Him with her appearance, her speech, her actions, and even her time. Someone once said "only one life will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last." A Christian lady should live her short life on this earth for the things of eternity and her Lord, Jesus Christ. She should seek to be everything God instructed her to be and never seek to be close to the world.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Matthew 6:33

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

RUTH

Read Ruth and Matthew 1:5

Naomi (a Hebrew) was the mother of two sons who both took wives from the Gentile nation of Moab. Naomi's husband and both sons died leaving Naomi widowed with two daughter-in-laws named Ruth and Orpah. Naomi encouraged them both to go back to their people (who worshiped idols) but only Orpah went. Ruth stayed, went with Naomi and ended up becoming the great-grandmother of David the king.

- A. When Ruth was left a widow she did not go into hopeless despair. Instead she chose to go on with her life and did not go back. She chose to go forward by

following Naomi and became a devout worshiper of the true God.

Question: Have you determined what you will do when you are placed in a position to have to choose between being controlled by circumstances and following God? What would you do, and why?

- B. In Ruth 1:16 Ruth made the statement that Naomi's people would be her people and Naomi's God would be her God.

Question: Have you made the decision that Jesus Christ will be your God and that His people will be your people? When did you make that decision and why?

- C. Ruth had to pick up grain after the harvesters. This was a practice which allowed the poor people a means to get food. Ruth went from riches to rags (after her husband died) but continued to be loyal and served God.

Question: If you knew that it would cost you everything you own to be a servant of God, would you still serve Him and why?

- D. Ruth married Boaz, who was a rich kinsmen of her deceased husband. When God blessed Ruth, in His timing she went from rags to riches.

Question: Do you accept the fact that God can do anything He desires to bless you, as long as it brings glory to the Lord, and why do you think God wants to bless you?

- E. There is a great comparison between the story of Ruth and the story of the church. Ruth was a Gentile; Boaz was a Hebrew. Boaz redeemed Ruth and then became her husband. Ruth showed outstanding qualities of

unselfishness and loyalty which is the foundation upon which true happiness can be built.

Question: As a saved lady do you realize that Jesus is your heavenly husband and do you love Him, showing loyalty and without selfishness? How do you show the Lord you love Him?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

MARY

Read Matthew 1; 2; 12:46; Luke 1; 2; John 2;1-11; 19:25;

Acts 1:14

Mary was from a humble village in Nazareth, yet in Luke 1:28 the Bible says, "Blessed art thou among women." It also says that she was "Highly favored of the Lord" and that she had "found favor with Him." If the world had chosen a mother for Christ it would not have chosen a humble peasant girl. God works in His ways which are higher than the ways of mankind and He chose Mary.

- A. Mary showed character that pleased God. She had a relationship with God that enabled her to have the Lord with her.

Question: When God looks at your character, your appearance, and your use of time, what do you think He says about you?

- B. When Gabriel announced to Mary that she would be the mother of Christ, she replied "Be it unto me according to thy word."

Question: do you have enough trust in the Lord to submit yourself to Him? When He asks you to do something for Him, do you submit yourself to follow His request or do you seek a way out thinking you have a better way? Why?

- C. Mary not only took upon herself the responsibility of giving birth to Jesus, but also raising him to adulthood.

Question: Are you committed to God to the extent that you continue following the Lord until the job assigned is completed, even after the initial excitement of the responsibility has faded? Give an example of a task God has given you to do.

-
- D. There came a time when Jesus told Mary he had to be about His Father's business. At about the age of thirty Jesus left his mother and his earthly home to follow the instructions of His heavenly Father.

Question: If God chooses to use you, your husband, or your children for His service, what do you think your response would be to His call and why?

QUESTIONS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION I - PERSONAL LIFE

Lesson Three

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Generally a woman chooses what she becomes in her adult life. She can choose to be a thief, a conniver, a loud mouth, or a lady. It is her choice that makes the difference. Before a female can become a lady, she must first choose to be one. It will not happen by accident. The Bible states in Psalms 135:15-18 that those who make idols are like the idols, "The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not; They have ears, but they hear not; neither is there any breath in their mouths. *They that make them are like unto them: so is every one that trusteth in them.*"

The main characteristics of a lady are not those seen outwardly, but those hidden inwardly. For proper development to take place, a woman must inwardly seek to be who she wants to be then proceed with proper training and application. She must first choose and then train to accomplish God's direction for her life. The following are some of the fundamental characteristics to be classified as a Christian lady.

I. A Christian lady must have the right attitude.

Webster's dictionary defines attitude as "a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state."

It is necessary that a woman has the right feeling or emotion regarding becoming a Christian lady or she will not accomplish this undertaking. In her mind she must understand what a Christian lady is and in her heart she must want to be a Christian lady. She should resolve to make the necessary changes in her life to become that lady. Proverbs 16:9. "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps." Proverbs 4:23. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life." **It is in the heart that the decisions of life are made.**

- A. The first attitude any woman should have is one of seeking the Lord and His ways. The Lord cannot be found in earthly things. When the heart and soul (where feelings come from) seeks the truth of God, it will find the Lord. Acts 17:27. "That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us:" The Lord is not far from any woman, just one act of faith away. Jeremiah 29:13. "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."
- B. A woman should first trust in the Lord and His guidance, not in her own heart and feelings. Proverbs 3:5. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding." A person who trusts in her own heart is referred to as a fool in the Bible. Proverbs 28:26, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered." There is no true hope in what comes from a woman's own heart. A wise woman is one who puts in her heart what she needs, not trusting in what is already inside. Jeremiah 17:9-10. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." The Lord knows what is in each woman's heart and deals with her accordingly.
- C. A proper motive or feeling in the heart will lead a woman to Christ and His ways. Denial or rejection of this urge to please God will shut out the Lord and allow carnality to take control. Ephesians 4:19, "Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness." Luke 18:9, "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others". When a woman becomes self-righteous she will despise and even hate others rather than love and cherish them. A self-righteous woman will use herself as the standard of right and wrong or good and evil. She will not accept the Lord and the Bible as her standard.

II. **A Christian lady must have the right character.**

Webster's dictionary defines character as "one of the attributes or features that make up and distinguish an individual; the complex of mental and ethical traits marking and often individualizing a person." The best way to describe character is by adding the suffix 'ability' to the following words. When the suffix ability is added to a word it shows "capacity, fitness, or tendency to act or be acted on in a specified way."

- A. A Christian lady should manifest reliability. A reliable woman is one who is suitable or fit to be trusted. She is a woman in which others can have confidence and also can be leaned or rested upon because she is able to do her part. Proverbs 31:11. "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." The word trust in this verse is the same as rely. This verse is basically saying that the virtuous woman's husband relies upon her. Galatians 5:10, "I have confidence in you through the Lord, that ye will be none otherwise minded: but he that troubleth you shall bear his judgment, whosoever he be." II Corinthians 7:16, "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things." Reliability causes others to have confidence in a woman and trust in her actions.
- B. A Christian lady should manifest dependability. She can be counted on by those who trust in her works because she will do everything possible to accomplish her assignment. Paul depended upon Timothy because he knew Timothy would finish the work assigned to him. I Timothy 6:20. "O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:" God depended on Paul knowing that he would finish what was given to him. I Timothy 1:11-12. "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;"

Not all saved people are dependable. Some will fail and not finish their assignment. There are some negative examples in the Bible, I Timothy 1:19-20, "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenaeus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to

blaspheme." It is imperative that every Christian lady finish what she starts. II Corinthians 7:16. "I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things."

- C. A Christian lady should manifest flexibility. A flexible woman is able to bend
or
adapt to situations. Questions that often come up in life are "should a woman change or not?" Does she change for her husband? Does she change for God?

Does she change for her church? Does she change for others or some event
in

her life? The answer to these questions is yes and no. It depends upon what she is asked to change. Flexibility is clearly understood when immutability
(not

able to change at all) and repentability (able to change completely) are placed in association with it.

1. There are some things in life that should be flexible because they will make no difference in the long run. I Corinthians 10:27-29, "If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, *asking no question for conscience sake*. But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not *for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake*: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof: *Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other*: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" A Christian lady should be flexible in regard to the many things in life which are temporal and have no eternal value and flexible on issues important to other people.
2. There are other things that should not be changed no matter what the circumstances. Things in life which have eternal value are **not** to change due to circumstances or other peoples' feelings. Romans 12:9, "Let love be without dissimulation (insincerity). Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good." Philippians 2:14-16, "Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and

harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

3. There are still other things in life that should not be there and should be changed. **When there are areas of life that do not glorify Christ, they should be completely changed.** Colossians 3:8-13, "But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all. Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."

D. A Christian lady should manifest predictability. A predictable woman is one who has declared or indicated in advance what she is going to do. A Christian lady is one who has committed her life to Christ and His way to the extent that others will know what she is going to choose before she declares it. Philippians 3:15-16, "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." I Corinthians 1:10. "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

E. A Christian lady should manifest teachability. A teachable woman is one who receives instruction and can be edified. A Christian lady must be one who receives instruction and continues to learn throughout her life. II Timothy

2:2, "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." Proverbs 9:9, "Give instruction to a wise man, and he will be yet wiser: teach a just man, and he will increase in learning." Titus 2:3-5, "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

III. A Christian lady must have the right commitment.

Webster's dictionary defines commitment as "putting another in charge of or in trust of a particular thing." A Christian lady must be willing to obligate herself to those God has placed in authority over her. She must know to whom she is committed and to what she has committed. A commitment to a wrong person or thing can be devastating and destructive.

- A. A Christian lady's first commitment should be her life commitment to the Lord, putting total trust in Him. Every moment of life should be lived for Him. II Timothy 1:12, "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." **It is never wrong to commit a life to the Lord.**
- B. A Christian lady is one who commits her works to the Lord Jesus Christ and has entrusted those works to Him. Proverbs 16:3, "Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established."
- C. A Christian lady is one who commits the direction for her life to the Lord and follows it because she knows her life belongs to Him. Psalms 37:5, "Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."
- D. A Christian lady is one who commits herself to her local church. Hebrews 10:25, "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." A Christian lady should be actively involved with others who

are of the same life, attitude, and purpose to maintain her spiritual strength and commitment. There is only one place on this earth where this will take place and that is in the local New Testament church in which God has placed her.

- E. A Christian lady is one who commits herself to her husband. Proverbs 31:11, "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." The virtuous woman in the book of Proverbs was one who worked and made her husband important. Proverbs 12:4, "A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones."
- F. A Christian lady is one who commits herself to her family. A strong commitment can have an everlasting influence. Proverbs 31:1, "The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him." II Timothy 1:5, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." One of the most important helpers to Paul was Timothy, who became a man greatly used of God because of the influence and commitment his mother and grandmother had toward God.
- G. A Christian lady is one who commits herself to her employer. Ephesians 6:5-8, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." When a woman is employed she should give her best to her employer, provided he asks for honest work.

IV. A Christian lady must be trustworthy and loyal.

Webster's dictionary defines trust as "assured reliance on the character, ability, strength, or truth of someone or something." It defines loyalty as "to never swerve in allegiance and to be faithful to a particular person or cause." Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Christian ladies need to establish trust in the right people and the right causes to be able to develop the important trait of loyalty. If she puts total trust in something it becomes unchangeable or unwaverable. She should never put her trust in things that are not stable or eternal. **If she puts her trust in a person, she**

should remain loyal to that person as long as the person continues in the character and strength which produced the trust.

Trust and loyalty seem to be traits that are getting lost with the deterioration of our society. Some ridicule loyalty as being blind, not realizing that blind loyalty is to retain an allegiance to someone without being willing or able to discern, judge, or question the validity of the actions or motives. Blind loyalty can only be in place if there is no loyalty to the Lord because His truths will always cause wrong and evil to be questioned, discerned, and judged.

A. A Christian lady trusts in the Lord and is loyal to Him.

1. When a Christian lady trusts in the Lord and is loyal to Him, she is surrounded by mercy. Mercy is the showing of compassion or forbearance to an offender. Psalms 32:10, "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about."
2. When a Christian lady trusts in the Lord and is loyal to Him she will find sanctuary under His protection. Psalms 57:1, "Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast."
3. When a Christian lady trusts in the Lord and is loyal to Him she will know happiness. Proverbs 16:20, "He that handleth a matter wisely shall find good: and whoso trusteth in the LORD, happy is he."
4. When a Christian lady trusts in the Lord and is loyal to Him she is adorned with a meek (mild) and quiet (restrained) spirit. I Peter 3:3-5, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands:"

B. A Christian lady who trusts in God is also to trust in those people He has placed in positions of authority over her and remain loyal to them.

1. A Christian lady should show trust and loyalty to the leaders God has instructed her to follow. For example: Paul, a leader and teacher of the church at Corinth stated in I Corinthians 11:1, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." Paul told the church at Thessalonica that there were some in the church that were over them in the Lord. I Thessalonians 5:12-13, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves."

There are men and women that God has placed in leadership positions

to assist Christian ladies in developing into all God instructed. Problems or misunderstandings can interfere with trusting others. If a problem occurs with

a leader, a Christian lady must follow proper biblical instructions on handling the problem. She should always go directly to the person and discuss the problem privately until the problem is settled. Matthew 18:15, "Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault, between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother." If a Christian lady loses trust in a leader, she becomes susceptible to rumors, gossip, and vain imagination. At that point, she will be inclined to act upon these emotions if she does not follow proper biblical instructions to confront

a

presumed problem. This will lead to her completely losing trust, loyalty and commitment. When this happens, there will always be hurt feelings either in

a

church, a marriage, or a family.

II Timothy 4:3-4, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

2. A Christian lady needs to understand the hurt that takes place in the life of those in leadership when followers are not loyal.
 - a. Paul suffered when some of those he trusted became disloyal and turned away from him and God to follow a different way. II Timothy 4:10, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia." II Timothy 4:16, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge."
 - b. Christ suffered the ultimate anguish when He was forsaken by His disciples. Matthew 26:56, "But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled."
 3. A Christian lady is instructed not to follow those who deny the power of God. II Timothy 3:5, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." There are some who will try to get a Christian lady to turn back to the old way of doing things based on self-will and power.
- C. A Christian lady will return to her old way of life if she does not continue to trust the Lord and stay loyal to Him in every situation. She must not allow vain imaginations to control her. If she does, this will produce distrust, which eventually will cause her to fail to live the kind of Christian life God wants.
1. A Christian lady will go back to the old way of life if she looks back, taking her eyes off her Lord. Galatians 4:9, "But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?"
 2. A Christian lady will go back to the old way of life if she seeks earthly gain or material possessions, known as "keeping up with the Jones". II Peter 2:15, "Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;" Matthew 6:21 & 24, "For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also; No man can serve two masters: for either

he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

3. A Christian lady will go back to the old way of life if she puts other people before God. Matthew 10:37, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."
4. A Christian lady will go back to the old way of life if she loses control of her tongue and allows it to control her. Once something wrong or derogatory is said it cannot be taken back and generally has to be enforced by the old actions of pride and arrogance. James 3:3-5, "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth. Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!" More Christian ladies revert back to the old way of life because of words they have said than for any other reason.
5. A Christian lady who goes back to the old way of life is worse off than she was the first time. II Peter 2:21-22, "For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

V. A Christian lady must be faithful.

Webster's dictionary defines faithful as "being firm in adherence to promises made and remain steadfast in affection or allegiance". A Christian lady is one who sticks with her promises and does not quit when problems or disruptions occur.

- A. A Christian lady is one who does not tear down or destroy those to whom she has promised to be faithful. Proverbs 11:13, "A talebearer revealeth secrets:

but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

- B. A Christian lady is one who provides health by being a faithful ambassador for the Lord. Proverbs 13:17, "A wicked messenger falleth into mischief: but a faithful ambassador is health."
- C. A Christian lady is one who is a faithful witness and always tells the truth. Proverbs 14:5, "A faithful witness will not lie: but a false witness will utter lies."
- D. A Christian lady is one who is faithful in all things and particularly the little things. Luke 16:10, "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. Luke 19:17, "And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities." I Timothy 3:11, "Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things."
- E. A Christian lady is a steward of the ministries of God and, consequently, it is required that she be faithful. I Corinthians 4:2, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."
- F. A Christian lady is one who does not turn away from being what God instructed her to be.
 1. I Timothy 1:6, "From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;"
 2. I Timothy 5:15, "For some are already turned aside after Satan."
 3. Titus 1:14, "Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth."

VI. A Christian lady must be pure.

Webster's dictionary says that purity is "to be clean; innocent; modest; blameless; and consecrated". The greatest area of impurity in the Bible is unapproved sexual activity of any kind. It is not just the sexual acts which defile a woman, but also what she thinks in her heart. The Bible says that it is the "things in the heart that defiles" not just what takes place on the outside. A pure lady is one who has a right heart about sin and completely avoids the dirt and guilt that follows any unpure action.

James 4:8, "Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded." Acts 15:9, "And put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith."

- A. A Christian lady has a pure heart because of the cleansing that comes from God at the point of salvation. Titus 1:15, "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled."
- B. A Christian lady has virtue (excellence) and thinks on the pure things of God. Philippians 4:8, "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."
- C. A Christian lady avoids becoming involved in other people's sins in order to remain pure. I Timothy 5:22, "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men's sins: keep thyself pure." II Timothy 2:22, "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."

CONCLUSION

There are many women in the world, but only a small percentage of them are Christian ladies. **To be a Christian lady requires acceptance and implementation of the things of God into her life.** The six areas listed in this lesson are crucial to becoming the Christian lady that God wants. Many times a Christian lady is seen as one who dresses nicely; but in reality a Christian lady is determined by what she is on the inside. Whether or not a woman is a Christian lady can be determined by who she is, not just what she looks like or who her parents are. Many times women who come from good families do not turn out to be Christian ladies, and some women who came from weak families do become Christian ladies. **It is a choice each women can and should make.**

HOMEWORK

Memorize Isaiah 26:3

"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in
Copyright 1998 Frederick T. Allen

thee."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

HANNAH

Read I Samuel 1:1-2:21

Hannah was a lady and is a great example of one who lived a life exemplifying God. When she was ridiculed she went to the Lord, not to the world. As a result God gave her a son who turned the priesthood back to God and led the nation of Israel back to God.

- A. I Samuel 1:4-8. Hannah was given much in earthly possessions and was cared for very well by her husband. However, she was not content with earthly things and sought a son from God.

Question: If you had many earthly possessions and were rich in this world's goods, do you think you would still seek the things of God? If so, why do you think you would not be satisfied with earthly things?

-
- B. I Samuel 1:11-28. Hannah made a vow to the Lord that if God would give her a son, she would give her son back to God. She kept that vow and did not withhold her son from God.

Question: How important is your word and do you follow through on your commitments to God? What are some promises you made to God and have kept?

- C. I Samuel 2:19. Each year Hannah brought a coat to Samuel even though she had given him to the Lord. Hannah appreciated what God did for her and carried out the stewardship toward her son knowing that he belonged to God.

Question: What kind of steward are you? God has placed in your care many things that belong to Him. How do you take care of them, particularly the things He has placed on the inside?

**NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:
WOMAN WITH AN ISSUE OF BLOOD**

Read Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-34; Luke 8:43-48

- A. Mark 5:26. The woman with the issue of blood spent all that she had trying to get a cure for her illness. She realized that mankind could do nothing to fulfill her need.

Question: What has happened in your life that helped you to understand mankind does not have the ability to fulfill your needs? What caused you to put your complete trust in Christ?

- B. Mark 5:28, 34. The woman with the issue of blood believed so strongly that Christ could heal her that she only touched the hem of his garment and was healed. Jesus called her his daughter and said that her faith had made her whole.

Question: Do you have faith in the Lord to the extent that you believe He can provide all your needs? What are some examples from your life when you trusted God and He provided?

- C. Mark 5:30. Jesus knew that virtue had gone out of Him when the woman with the issue of blood touched his clothes. In this passage virtue is the miraculous power of Christ and it was given to this woman when she came to Him by faith.

Question: Have you ever experienced the virtue of Christ upon you
and what has been the long range results?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION I - PERSONAL LIFE

Lesson Four

SUBMISSION TO AUTHORITY

INTRODUCTION

Authority has always been and still is the greatest area of controversy in everyone's life. The human nature (flesh) in **everyone** is always working to be the god of that person's life. The flesh seeks to direct a Christian away from God, His plans, and His authority. It wants to be THE authority and control what a person does. The word authority is defined in Strong's Concordance as "delegated influence; exercise control upon; bring under the power of; superiority (in rank or character)". In Webster's dictionary as "the power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior". Authority is the power that is delegated to a person by a proper representative of an organization or government.

Humanism has assumed the position that life is self-propitiating and nothing or no one is over it or in control of it. Humanism denies God and His control, elevating each person to the position of being his own god. Humanism is the worshiping of self and appointing an individual as the soul's authority or god. Romans 6:12-13, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Romans 6:16, "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" The direction of a person's life is established by the choice between self authority or God's authority.

This age-old position began in the Garden of Eden when Eve and Adam became separated from God by rejecting God as the authority. This denial and separation from the

authority of God cautions Christians about rejecting or "correcting" the Word of God, the Bible. When a person changes God's Word, His authority is rejected and changed into something belonging to mankind. Lesson One established that the Bible is the basis for all knowledge and direction from God. Authority must be established from the Bible or it is not the authority of God. There will never be any authority of God outside of what the Bible establishes. Philippians 2:9-11. "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Submission to God is also submission to His designated authorities. Hebrews 13:17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

There are times when humanism will question the designated authorities of God asking "what if they fail to do what is best for me?" The best for each saved person is what God said, not what humanistic reason declares. However there are some in authority who rebel and do not follow God. Proverbs 29:2, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." Establishing the direction from the Bible is the only way to know if a person in authority is following God. **Remember that authority is something which is delegated and if it violates the instruction of the one doing the delegating, then that person in authority is out of line, is functioning on his own and following humanism.** In short, that person is rebelling against God and His ways. It is always appropriate to determine if a person is a proper authority by comparing his instructions with the Bible. No authority designated by God has the right to violate God's Word when instructing others about their lives.

When Jesus was physically present on this earth, He was given the authority to represent God. When He left this earth and went to Heaven and assumed the position of authority over everything in existence, he left His authority with his disciples. They were His servants responsible to continue representing the way of God. Mark 13:34, "For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch." **Every Christian should be very careful when dealing with those in authority. If a**

person is properly and correctly representing God, then it is the one that he is representing who actually is being dealt with. If the person in authority is not properly or correctly representing God, then it is the person's "self" the Christian is dealing with. If self is in authority then a Christian lady should be very careful because she can expect a selfish, self-glorifying, and self-protective response from that person in authority.

A Christian lady should have the right reaction to those in authority over her and she should also be a proper authority to those who are under her. She should always remember that authority was established by God and that she will give account to God for how she responds, uses, or abuses it. She is to **submit to the authority when it is right and deal properly with it when it is wrong.** A Christian lady must determine if the action requested by the authority is from God or the "self" of the person in authority.

Whether or not a Christian lady submits is a very distinct identification of the difference between being a woman or being a lady. A Christian lady is one who has a tender heart of submission and not the hardness of obedience. To understand a heart of submission, it is imperative that the Christian lady understands the difference between these two words. In Hebrews 13:17 both words are used in the same verse, definitely showing that the two words have different meanings. It says that Christians are to obey those who have the rule over them, and then submit. Submission is a second action in following those in authority and implies a choosing based upon a person's desire.

The word submit is a combination of two words: "sub" which means below or under, and "mit" which comes from the French word "mittere" which means to send. Mission is the act of sending so the word submission is the act or choice of placing oneself under the sender. A submissive lady is one who places herself under the sending authority and proceeds on the assigned mission by choice. Submission is never a mandatory act imposed upon another person but a free choice based on the person being sent--not on the one doing the sending.

Obedience is different in that the authoritative person must assume control and apply some form of pressure causing the person underneath to follow the instructions. It is the responsibility of the person in authority to make the other person do what he is told. It is amazing the Bible never uses the word obey when giving directions regarding the relationship of a wife with her husband and never uses the word submit when referring to parents and children. Children are to obey their parents and wives are to be submitted to

their husbands. When children fail to obey their parents they are committing an act of rebellion. When wives fail to submit to their husbands they are also failing the instructions of God. The first is a sin of commission, and the second is a sin of omission. The first is earthly and the second spiritual. A Christian lady who does not submit to those God has placed in positions of authority above her has a spiritual problem ***IF that authority is correctly representing God.*** Obedience always requires an external force of power; submission is always an internal choice based on the heart, not an external power.

Submission requires the giving of oneself to another. Submission is to give up possession willfully and freely, placing that possession in another person's hands. When the fall took place, Eve took possession of her own life and, consequently, every woman is born with possession of her own life. Because of this, each woman has the responsibility of choosing to give up her life through submission. Since there are several parts of each individual's life, submission requires the giving of different parts to different people.

I. A Christian lady is to submit to the authority or lordship of Jesus Christ.

A Christian lady is one who has willingly given her total being to Jesus knowing that He will take care of her because of who He is, not because of what she has been or what she has done.

A. A Christian lady is one who recognizes that Jesus is the Lord. The title or position of "Lord" means the one in supreme authority and power.

1. A Christian lady is one who knows that the Lord is eternal. Revelation 1:8, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."

2. A Christian lady is one who recognizes that Jesus is the supreme authority. Revelation 17:14, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

B. A Christian lady is one who has submitted herself to the Lord and received His salvation. When a woman realizes that Jesus is the Lord and has the authority to cast her into Hell or accept her into Heaven, then it is imperative that she comes to Him, submits herself to Him and trusts Him with her life. She accepts Him as her Lord and Master. John 13:13, "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am."

1. A Christian lady is one who has confessed with her mouth that Jesus Christ is her Lord. Romans 10:9, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."
2. A Christian lady is one who realizes that her salvation is a result of the work of the Holy Ghost, not any works of her own. I Corinthians 12:3, "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."
3. A Christian lady is one who realizes that her life belongs to the Lord. Romans 14:8, "For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's."
4. A Christian lady is one who knows that God does not keep track of her sins; they are gone because of her salvation. Romans 4:8, "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. (Impute is to take an inventory)"
Psalms 103:12, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."

C. A Christian lady is one who submits herself to the Lord Jesus Christ continually

all her life not just at salvation.

1. A Christian lady is one who has given herself to the Lord and continues to resist the devil who endeavors to get her to turn back to her old life. James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
2. A Christian lady is one who not only is saved but loves the Lord with all her heart, soul and mind. Matthew 22:37, "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."
3. A Christian lady is one who has given up trying to be righteous by her

own power. Romans 10:3, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."

- D. A Christian lady is one who knows that God is her Father and has confidence in her position in the Lord, not in her "self". II Corinthians 6:18, "And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."

II. **A Christian lady is to submit to the authority in the home.**

God said in the Bible that it was not good that man should live alone. Genesis 2:18, "And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him." God created the woman as a help meet for man and placed the need for companionship in both. The fall (or separation from God) broke the fulfillment of daily fellowship with God. This left both people empty and alone, requiring other ways to handle this emptiness caused by the separation from God. Because of this, God established that a woman's desire (to stretch out after; longing) for this companionship would be toward her husband. Genesis 3:16, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." God also established that the husband was to be the authority or ruler of the home.

- A. A Christian lady submits to her husband knowing she is following the instructions of the Lord. Colossians 3:18, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord."
- B. A Christian lady is one who realizes that submission to her husband is like submission to the Lord. The Lord told the wife to submit to her husband and failure to do so is disobedience to God. Ephesians 5:22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." **It is important to remember that a Christian lady's first submission is to the Lord,** not to be violated by sinning even if her husband demands she sins.
- C. A Christian lady is one who physically submits herself to her husband. I Corinthians 7:3-5, "Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence:

and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." (benevolence - conjugal duty) (incontinency - failure to restrain sexual appetite) **Remember that submission is a desire that comes from the heart, not the body.** If the heart doesn't want to submit, a woman should ask the question "why"? Sexual relationship is a picture of unity not conflict. There should be internal unity before sexual unity or God's purpose will be lost. Many times in the life of a Christian the two intimate relationships (with the Lord and with the spouse) are directly attached and physical intimacy problems indicate spiritual intimacy problems. If a problem exists between a husband and wife, it needs to be dealt with as soon as possible or the sexual relationship will suffer.

III. **A Christian lady is to submit to the authorities of her church.**

God places the responsibility of watching for the souls of His children upon chosen men. God told His children to obey and submit to their authority, allowing them to care for their souls. This submission is not the physical body nor the earthly life, but the soul. II Corinthians 8:5, "And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Ephesians 5:21, "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God." Hebrews 13:17, "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."

- A. A Christian lady is one who follows the faith of those God has placed in authority over her, knowing where she will end up by following them. Hebrews 13:7, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Submission is not blind and every Christian lady should consider where she will end up if she

follows the ones in authority. She can determine where the one in authority is going by the way he lives. (life style)

B. A Christian lady is one who knows that God places some in authority over her to build her spiritually and prevent her destruction. They are placed in authority by God to build her so she will have a more effective life and not be ashamed of her life. II Corinthians 10:8, "For though I should boast somewhat more of our authority, which the Lord hath given us for edification, and not for your destruction, I should not be ashamed:

C. A Christian lady is one who realizes that the ones God has placed in authority work with her for the good of Christ. I Corinthians 16:15-16, "I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints,) That ye submit yourselves unto such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth." I Thessalonians 5:12, "And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you;"

D. A Christian lady who fails to submit to the **proper** authority is usurping that authority. If a woman refuses to place her life into the hands of the appropriate people God has appointed to authority, she is usurping their authority by personally retaining the control or authority of her own life. She is choosing to function as a lost person (separated from the authority of God) just as Eve did.

1. There was no need for the authority structure before the fall because the sin of rebellion was not present. As part of the consequence of sin, women were placed under the authority of men. A Christian lady is one who does not usurp authority. I Timothy 2:12. "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." (Usurp means to act of oneself; to dominate; To take possession of without legal claim; To take the place of by force; To seize or exercise authority or possession wrongfully).

A Christian lady is not to be a teacher over men nor place her will and life over the men that God has placed in authority. **This does**

not mean she can never voice her thoughts or feelings to the leaders. However, she is never to assume or claim a position of authority over them.

2. A Christian lady is one who does not speak out in church nor openly challenge or question the man who is speaking. God gives instructions for proper respect and order in the churches. I Corinthians 14:33-34, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law." A Christian lady may be asked by the leader in authority to give a testimony, teach, or address the church. If this happens a Christian lady needs to realize that she is functioning under the leader's authority and should never do anything that will conflict or hurt that authority.

IV. A Christian lady should submit to the authorities of the world.

A Christian lady should place her earthly life in the hands of those in authority over earthly affairs. A lady must be careful because many times those who are in earthly authority seek more than what God intended. It is only her earthly life that is subject to the powers of this earth.

A. A Christian lady is one who places herself under the authority of earthly leaders because they are placed there by God. Romans 13:1-4, "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

B. A Christian lady is one who prays for those in authority knowing they are responsible for maintaining a safe community in which she may live a

peaceable life. I Timothy 2:1-2, "I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty."

- C. A Christian lady is one who follows the ordinances of man because of God's instructions. I Peter 2:13-14, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well."
- D. A Christian lady is one who remembers that the world officials were placed there to by God to provide freedom to do His work. Titus 3:1, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work,"
- E. A Christian lady is one who obeys God above mankind and if the officials of the world try to force her to sin she chooses God. Acts 5:29, "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."

VI. A Christian lady is NOT instructed to submit herself to her employer.

Submission is the action of putting a person's life in another person's hands. A Christian lady needs to be careful to only place her life in the hands of those God placed in His positions of authority. There are **only four** positions listed in the New Testament she should be submitted to; the Lord, her husband, government officials, and her church leaders.

- A. The Bible has instructions to servants (slaves) that have very little application to the Christians of today. Today employees are not slaves, employers are not masters, and a person has the freedom of separating from a place of employment. Employers are not given the responsibility of caring for the lives of their employees and God did not instruct Christian ladies to submit to them. However, the Bible does give good advice in the situations with servants and masters which could also be used with employers. I Peter 2:18, "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and

gentle, but also to the froward." Ephesians 6:5-7, "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:"

B. A Christian lady does have instructions from God regarding work and the kind of employee she should be.

1. A Christian lady is to work to keep from being a busybody. Young widows are not to be taken care of by the church because they have a tendency to be idle and become busybodies. A busybody is one who gets involved in things she should not be concerned with. This is fueled by not working or by not staying constructively busy, providing an abundance of empty time. I Timothy 5:11 -13, "But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry; Having damnation, because they have cast off their first faith. And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." II Thessalonians 3:10-12, "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."

2. A Christian lady should be an energetic worker. Ecclesiastes 9:10, "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

3. A Christian lady is not to be lazy or she will suffer the consequences for her lack of work. Proverbs 10:26, "As vinegar to the teeth, and as smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to them that send him." Proverbs 13:4, "The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." Proverbs 26:16, "The

sluggard is wiser in his own conceit than seven men that can render a reason." A lazy self-important person can find more reasons not to work than seven people can find for him to work.

4. A Christian lady should give an honest day of work for a day's pay. I Thessalonians 4:12, "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."
5. A Christian lady does everything in the name of Jesus Christ. Colossians 3:17, "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

CONCLUSION

A Christian lady is not a second rate citizen in the Kingdom of God nor should she be a second rate citizen in her earthly life, in her home, or in her church. Forcefully lowering a woman by making her obey those in authority makes her second rate. However, she should understand submission so she can choose to submit herself and follow those in proper authority because she is right with God. It is God's way of **keeping order in this world** and she should want to follow God's way. Following God's ways will make a Christian lady be the first class person God intended her to be. A lady is one who chooses to be what God wants her to be, giving up her desire to be the supreme authority of her life so she can be used properly by God. This means she should excel to glorify God, and not to excel in the world's system. In every area of existence God is the issue, not the personal, selfish life. Submission is one of the main identifiers of Godly ladies and is easily seen by all.

HOMEWORK

Memorize II Corinthians 10:5

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

ABIGAIL

Read I Samuel 25:2-42; 30:1-19

Abigail was the wife of Nabal a man evil in his doings, who rejected David and aggravated his wrath. Abigail went to David and convinced him to spare Nabal and all his house. Ten days later Nabal died and Abigail became the wife of David. God rewarded her for her loyalty to Him.

- A. When Abigail found out that David (the annointed of God) had requested something from her husband and when her husband refused, she immediately went to David and gave him the provisions he sought.

Question: If placed in a position of having to choose between a leader and the instructions of God who would you choose and why?

-
- B. When Abigail met David she called him lord and ask him to put the iniquity of her husband upon her. She was willing to receive the judgement of David to protect her household.

Question: Do you consider your individual life and rights more important than others and would you be willing to take the penalty for someone else's sin? Give an example.

_____.

- C. When Abigail met David he recognized that she was sent by God. Her life and actions were such that David blessed God for her and took her advice and did not shed any blood (vs 32-33).

Question: Do you follow Christ with your life to the extent that leaders seek your advice and praise God for you? Give an example of some good advice you have given a leader.

_____.

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES:

LOIS & EUNICE

Read Acts 16:1-3; II Timothy 1:1-7

Lois was the grandmother of Timothy and Eunice his mother. Both their names are listed in the Bible because of their faith. Paul stated that Timothy had the same faith that his mother and grandmother had.

- A. Lois and Eunice both had faith that was recognized by Paul. It is evident they were recognized by the early Christians for their faith.

Question: Is your faith recognized by others, what is your faith in, and where will it take you?

_____.

- B. Lois and Eunice were responsible for transferring the faith they had to Timothy, one of the key leaders in the establishment of the early churches.

Question: is your faith in God such that it will be transferred to your children and what influence do you hope it will have on them?

C. Eunice, the mother of Timothy, was a Jew and she was married to a Greek. Even though Eunice was married to a Gentile she still practiced her faith and was responsible for her son being a man of God.

Question: Eunice had to carry the work of the Lord alone since her husband was not a believer. Have you made a strong enough commitment to the Lord that if necessary you will do His work alone? If you were faced with the decision to have to choose, why do you think you would choose God?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION I - PERSONAL LIFE

Lesson Five

PERSONAL IDENTITY

INTRODUCTION

Identification is the process by which other people verify a person's credentials. When a woman writes a check, her identification is asked for. When a woman flies on a plane, her identification is asked for. If she departs and returns to this country, she must produce proper identification. To verify the ones who are Christian ladies, identification must be checked. The Bible has examples to give us ways to identify a Christian lady. The whole book of First John is an example written for the purpose of identifying those who are saved and those who are lost. The Bible is THE book determining the guidelines that must be followed when establishing who and what a Christian lady is to be. There is not an identification card stating that a woman is a Christian lady, but there are several ways found in the Bible by which she can be identified.

I. A Christian lady has her own personal identity.

- A. A Christian lady is a child of God. The word child means the son or daughter of an identified parent; a descendant. Being a child of God is a specific identification with God as His descendant. A Christian lady should always be identified with Christ.
 - 1. A Christian lady becomes a child of God by receiving Jesus Christ and allowing His power to transform her from her earthly family to God's family (being "born again" into a new family). John 1:12, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"
 - 2. A Christian lady has been adopted into God's family with all the rights and privileges that go with being in His family. Romans 8:14-17, "For

as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

3. A Christian lady is a child of God by the promise of God, not by any earthly birth or activity. Galatians 4:28-31, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free."

B. A Christian lady should dress properly to be recognized as a female. Today there are many people that do not like the way God made them. Many of these become homosexuals saying that they were born this way. Some women say that they should have been men because they have the feelings of men. These statements are made by people who are spitting in God's face and denying His authority. They are trying to become something they are not. They are accepting the world's teaching and rejecting God's teaching. Christian ladies should dress in such a way that it glorifies Christ. A Christian lady should be proud to present herself as a daughter of God, and not try to impress others with manliness.

1. God wants men to look like men, and women to look like women. Deuteronomy 22:5, "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do so are abomination unto the LORD thy God." A simple question to ask is could you be mistaken for a man by the way you dress? Being an abomination means being something that is extremely disgusting and hated or loathed.

2. Many times a women will dress to attract attention to her vessel (her body) to show all her outward features instead of trying to show the person inside. I Timothy 2:9 "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array;" When a woman dresses purposely to attract attention to her body, she is following the earthly, carnal life and will always attract the earthly, carnal man. When a woman establishes a relationship based on her body, sin will always prevail which will hinder or destroy her Christian life.
- C. A Christian lady should have mannerisms that show forth Christ. (a characteristic or customary mode of action) Christianity has certain manners by which the world and other Christians identify a person as a follower of Christ.
1. A Christian lady is identified by her manners. Luke 7:39, "Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner." The woman in this passage was identified as not being a godly lady because of her mannerisms.
 2. A woman is identified with certain groups or people by having manners like them. Ezekiel 11:12, "And ye shall know that I am the LORD: for ye have not walked in my statutes, neither executed my judgments, but have done after the manners of the heathen that are round about you." God identified the children of Israel as heathen by them having manners like the people that lived around them.
 3. A woman's conversation or communication determines her manners. II Peter 3:11, "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness," I Corinthians 15:33, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." A godly lady is one who controls her words and speaks only what is determined to be proper by the Bible and Christianity.

- D. A Christian lady should have discretion in everything that she might glorify Christ (discretion - to be circumspect or to make responsible decisions). Even when a Christian lady has the proper looks and mannerisms she must also have correct judgment when dealing with others and situations. Titus 2:4-5, "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."
1. A woman may have beauty but if she is not discreet that beauty is repugnant (offensive, repulsive). Proverbs 11:22, "As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion." A Christian lady is one who is careful to be discreet with her actions and words realizing she affects others.
 2. A Christian lady gets discretion from the Word of God. Proverbs 1:2-4, "To know wisdom and instruction; to perceive the words of understanding; To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; To give subtilty to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion."
 3. A Christian lady fulfills her responsibilities with discretion. Psalms 112:5, "A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion." A Christian lady endeavors to accomplish the ministries of the Lord but if she works without discretion she will hinder and offend others.
 4. A Christian lady governs her anger with discretion. Proverbs 19:11, "The discretion of a man deferreth his anger; and it is his glory to pass over a transgression." What causes a Christian lady to control anger is realizing what effect it will have on others and the name of Christ.
 5. A Christian lady walks wisely realizing the shortness of time. Ephesians 5:15-16, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." It seems there is never enough time to accomplish all that needs to be done; therefore, a Christian lady must be frugal or discreet with her time.

II. A Christian lady has several joint or shared identities.

- A. A Christian lady has a joint identity with Jesus Christ. When a woman is born again she is joined to Christ never to be an independent individual again. Hebrews 13:5, "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."
1. God wants Christian ladies to be identified with Christ, and dissociated from the world. II Corinthians 6:13-17, "Now for a recompense in the same, (I speak as unto my children,) be ye also enlarged. Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." A Christian lady cannot have an identity with Christ and attach herself to the world. God wants her identified by everyone as being committed to Christ.
 2. God wants Christian ladies to be identified as His children. Galatians 3:26, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." According to John there are only two families, God's and the devil's, (for all humans). A Christian lady is a part of God's family and should be identified as such.
 3. God wants Christian ladies to be identified as children of light, not darkness. Ephesians 5:8, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:" a child of light is one who shows forth the glory of God and does not show forth the world.

4. God wants Christian ladies to walk in love as Christ did. Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour."

B. A Christian lady has joint identity with her earthly family. When God set mankind as inhabitants upon the earth He divided them into families. Many times when God brought judgment upon an action of sin the whole family was punished. At the same time whole families were blessed for the action of one.

1. A Christian lady needs to realize that she will share in some of the consequences of actions taken by her earthly family, whether good or bad. Judges 1:25, "And when he shewed them the entrance into the city, they smote the city with the edge of the sword; but they let go the man and all his family." The man who assisted the nation of Israel was spared and his whole family was released because of his righteous actions.

2. A Christian lady should realize that she is a part of her earthly family and do her best to maintain harmony. I Samuel 20:6, "If thy father at all miss me, then say, David earnestly asked leave of me that he might run to Bethlehem his city: for there is a yearly sacrifice there for all the family." David asked for permission to be absent from the king in order to participate in his family's activity. A Christian lady should not completely isolate herself from her earthly family. She should continue to function as part of her earthly family seeking to reach them so they may become a part of her new family. Romans 12:18, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
 3. A Christian lady's physical care is the primary responsibility of her earthly family. I Timothy 5:16, "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." I Timothy 5:8, "But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." Christian ladies also have earthly responsibilities, particularly the care of their own families.
- C. A Christian lady has joint identity with her husband. When a woman marries she adds her husband's name to her name, showing the uniting of her identity with his. A Christian lady who is married will always be identified with her husband. This is why God placed so many restrictions on who a Christian lady is to marry. If a Christian lady is not married, she should never consider marrying or becoming identified in any way with a man who is not identified with Christ.
1. A Christian lady separates from her parents and becomes one with her husband. Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." When a man and woman marry they become one. They always carry a joint identity, whether good or bad.
 2. Sarah, a godly lady and the wife of Abraham, was identified with her husband. Genesis 20:3,7, "But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the

woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife...Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine." God told Abimelech He would take his life if he did not give Sarah back to Abraham because she was his wife.

D. A Christian lady has joint identity with her church.

There is a lot of teaching today directing a Christian lady toward being an individual Christian with no identification with a church. Along with this digression towards independence in Christianity, comes anarchy, chaos, and failure in accomplishing God's purposes.

When a Christian lady informs someone of her church membership, she is immediately identified with that church, doctrine, history, beliefs, and practices. God established the local church as His plan for ministry, education, and growth. His ways should still be followed today. I Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 2:19-20, 4:11-12, "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers...Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone...And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"

It is local churches that God established to build Christian ladies, bringing them to maturity and involving them in ministry. It is critical for each Christian lady to identify herself with a good local church and respectfully carry its name.

III. A Christian lady is identified by her workmanship.

A Christian lady should work for the right things and for the right reasons. John 6:27-29, "Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him

hath God the Father sealed. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." I Corinthians 3:8-9, 13-15, "Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building... Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

- A. A Christian lady should have work standards that are godly and eternal. Hebrews 6:10, "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have shewed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister." B. A Christian lady should have standards of work that are righteous, full of Christ, and motivated by love. I John 3:10 "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." I John 3:18, "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth."
- C. A Christian lady should have standards of work that show Jesus is in her and is the basis for her life's deeds. Colossians 3:23, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;" II Corinthians 9:8 "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:" Colossians 1:10, "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;"
- D. A Christian lady is identified by others by the kind of worker she is. Tabitha was recognized by her good works of making coats and garments as well as being a disciple of Jesus Christ. Acts 9:36, "Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did."

IV. A Christian lady shares her new identify with her old identity; her “old self nature”.

After a woman gets saved she still has her old self (sin nature) in her. Her old sin nature has an earthly identity and everyone earthly recognizes her by that nature. However when she gets saved, she adds a new nature to her life (her born again godly spirit). The world does not understand this change and expects the same actions the woman had before she got saved. The world attributes her ‘godly’ acts to her becoming a ‘good’ person. It will not recognize her as a ‘changed’ person. They think her religion is just a selfish act resulting in them being rejected.

- A. A Christian lady is influenced through her flesh by the prince of the power of the air in his kingdom. Revelation 12:9, “And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.” Satan always uses the same controlling method of deception on people to cause them to believe things that are false. Satan works on Christian ladies by tempting them to think worldly instead of godly. He tries to get her to identify with the world and her identity in the world’s system.
- B. A Christian lady has two minds who share the same body. It is not uncommon for a saved lady to think two different ways, one worldly and one godly. She is identified by both jointly in the same person, and not identified as having two separate minds dwelling in the same body. The world system says that if a person has two separate minds, that person is "mentally ill" because they really have only one mind.
1. The saved person has the mind of Christ. I Corinthians 2:16, “For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ.” It is possible and correct for a saved person to think like Christ.
 2. The saved person still has the mind they had before they got saved. Romans 7:23, “But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.” Sin still works in a saved person's old, earthly mind. When a person gets saved the old mind is not removed,

but a new one is added.

- C. A Christian lady chooses which mind she will accept by yielding, and not fighting. Romans 6:12-13, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God." Most Christian ladies spend their whole life trying to remove the old way of worldly thinking instead of choosing to think with their new mind. The new mind is unfamiliar and cannot be reasoned out by the old mind. A Christian lady must **choose** to think differently with her new mind. Romans 7:25, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."
- D. A Christian's 'old' mind (with its worldly thoughts) is separated from God. Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." If a saved woman spends her life trying to correct or sanctify her earthly mind, she will waste her life and always carry the earthly identity. A Christian lady should choose to live in her spiritual new life and new mind.

CONCLUSION

Women have many identities in the world today; some good and some bad. A godly lady should choose to be identified as a Christian in all areas of her life. A person's identity is very important and should be established and protected, whether at home, school, church, work, or any other place. People in this world will treat a person according to her identity. A Christian lady should always glorify the holy name of Jesus by how she dresses, how she acts, or how she identifies herself. A Christian lady should always endeavor to be identified by the name "Christian".

HOMEWORK

Memorize Titus 2:4-5

"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

RACHEL

Read Genesis 29:1-31:55; 48:7; Ruth 4:11

Rachel was the youngest daughter of Laban (the brother of Rebecca) and became the wife of Jacob. Jacob went to the house of Laban because his mother and father sent him. The main reason Rachel became Jacob's wife was because she was from the right family. Genesis 28:2 "Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother."

- A. Rebecca and Isaac recognized that the inhabitants of Canaan (where they dwelt) were unsuitable people from which their son Jacob should take a wife. Jacob was sent to a "like family" to take a wife.

Question: How is your family identified and with whom? If you have not yet established a family of your own, who will your family be identified with, the inhabitants of the land or the family of God?

- B. Rachel met Jacob at the well where she brought her father's sheep to be watered. She was doing servant work for her father when God brought Jacob to her.

Question: Are you about your Father's business and if so in what ministry are you His servant?

- C. Rachel was remembered by God because of who she was, not because of her life actions. Rachel did many things wrong but God never forsook her. Instead He blessed her because of His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Question: Who are you and how are you identified? Describe how you

think others identify you.

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

JOANNA

Read Luke 8:1-3; 23:54-24:12

Joanna was the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and is recognized in the Bible for ministering to Jesus out of her substance. She was one of the first people at the tomb of Jesus, after His resurrection, intending to take care of His body.

- A. Joanna ministered to Jesus out of her own substance (things in existence or in hand, property). Every act of ministry in the church (the body of Christ) is still ministering to Jesus.

Question: Do you care enough about Christ to minister to Him out of your substance? What do you use or give of your substance?

- B. Joanna followed Jesus from Galilee to Jerusalem and was present at His crucifixion. The first day of the week she heard the message from the two men in shining garments saying that Jesus was raised from the dead and she remembered His words.

Question: Have you hidden the Word of God in your heart so that in times of trouble you remember what He said? How do you respond?

- C. Joanna testified what she had seen and heard to the eleven apostles. Even though they did not believe her, she still proclaimed the truth.

Question: Do you have the boldness to proclaim the truth even if others do

not believe you? How do you retain your assurance of the truth?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION II - HOME LIFE

Lesson Six

MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

In 1992 only about one-third of the homes in the United States were known as "traditional" homes: where a husband and wife live together with their own children. The other two-thirds were classified as: couples living together without marriage; couples who have been divorced and remarried with stepchildren; single parents; homosexuals; or single adults living alone. In 1992 the American Enterprise Institute reported that 80 percent of adolescents in psychiatric hospitals came from broken families. Three out of every four teenage suicides occur in households where a parent is absent. The percentage of single-parent households with teenage children is significantly associated with rates of violent crime and burglary. Some organizations are stating that the institution of marriage has failed, has become a burden on society and should be eliminated. It is obvious that God's institution, the home, is in great deterioration and definitely under attack.

At the same time a study done by the University of Virginia found a positive correlation between church attendance and marital stability. A twenty-five year study of church members' relationship to married life found that the couples who attended church regularly had only an eighteen percent divorce rate. The members who never or rarely attend church had a forty-seven percent divorce rate. The members who attended church regularly and showed a strong internal faith had marital satisfaction. Those couples outside of church and without God's authority in their lives had marriages that were failing miserably.

God established the home as an institution to glorify God. The world has changed the purpose of marriage and determined it to be used for: legitimizing of sex, providing a safe environment for children, a way to maintain a monogamous relationship, a place to stabilize finances, social acceptance, the sake of tradition, and many other purposes. God

established the home to show a binding commitment that lasts a lifetime. It is a picture of God's binding relationship with His family.

In the last 100 years churches that teach a person can lose her salvation (in essence, that God has divorced her) have flourished and grown in leaps and bounds. Divorce or broken homes have grown at almost the same proportions. Could there be a connection to these relationships? God still wants Christian homes built upon godly Christian marriages.

I. A Christian lady should understand that marriage is God's way.

- A. A Christian lady should understand that God made marriage to defeat the adversary and take away his condemnation. I Timothy 5:14, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully."
- B. A Christian lady should know that marriage is from the Lord, not an inheritance from earthly parents. Proverbs 19:14, "House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD." (prudent-to be circumspect and intelligent).
- C. A Christian lady should know that God stated marriage obtains favor with the Lord. Proverbs 18:22, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD." Ecclesiastes 9:9, "Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of thy life."
- D. A Christian lady should know that God joins one man and one woman together at marriage. Matthew 19:4-6, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Genesis 2:24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." In Ephesians 5:31 the word cleave is changed to joined.
- E. A Christian lady should understand that marriage brightens up her life. Proverbs 5:18, "Let thy fountain be blessed: and rejoice with the wife of thy youth." (Rejoice means to brighten up)

- F. A Christian lady should know that God made marriage honorable and caused sexual activity to be pure. Hebrews 13:4 "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."

II. A Christian lady needs to understand the difference between single, virgin, unmarried, or widow. These four categorizations are explained in I Corinthians Chapter Seven.

- A. The Bible does not have a category of adults known as singles. Webster states that a single person is "one who is not married especially one young and socially active." In society today single has become a classification for any person who is available for marriage, including those who have never been married or those who have been divorced or widowed. The Bible gives instructions and clarification regarding those God has chosen to be single.

1. Every Christian lady is not supposed to get married, but staying single and living a Christian life requires a special gift from God. I Corinthians 7:7-9, "For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that. I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." If a young Christian lady does not have a sex drive it is unusual and may be a gift from God, as classified in this passage. There are some who stay single because they have perverted the sex drive and directed it toward ungodly and forbidden acts, claiming that God made them this way. This is a lie instigated from their sin nature and is not an act of God.
2. There are some single Christian ladies who have had their sex drive removed or suppressed for God's glory. Christians should never make another person feel guilty if they are not married or even plan to never marry. It doesn't mean they are weird; it may be that they are gifted in this area. Matthew 19:12, "For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made

themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it." I Thessalonians 4:3-5, "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication: That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour; Not in the lust of concupiscence, even as the Gentiles which know not God:" (concupiscence - strong desire toward sex; lust). I Corinthians 7:34, "There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." God will not give this gift to a married Christian lady because she is responsible for caring for her husband.

- B. God honors the Christian lady who has not had sexual encounters before marriage and refers to them as virgins. In today's society a virgin is placed in a group all their own. In 1991 statistics showed that ninety-five percent of students graduating from high school were no longer virgins. These percentages improved by 1995 because of biblical teachings and commitment drives among young people and teens challenging them to remain virgins until their wedding night.
1. The Bible makes it clear that a virgin is one who has not had sexual intercourse. Genesis 24:16 "And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up." Webster defines a virgin as "a young woman who is absolutely chaste; (clean, innocent, modest) a person who has not had sexual intercourse." There is a difference between what the Bible refers to as a virgin (with her innocence) and what today's world refers to as a "technical virgin" (based on a strict or legal interpretation). Some women participate in all kinds of sexual activities, except intercourse, and still aspire to being a virgin.
 2. The Bible makes it clear that a Christian lady who is engaged to be married does not have the right to participate in sexual activity. I Corinthians 7:36 "But if any man think that he behaveth himself

uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry." A man who is engaged to be married is not to behave himself uncomely toward his fiancé (uncomely: unbecoming - not according with the standards appropriate to one's position).

3. Paul used the term virgin when dealing with a saved person's spiritual standing with Jesus Christ and helps a Christian lady to understand virginity. II Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ." (chaste: clean; innocent; modest; perfect). A Christian lady is engaged to Jesus (because of her salvation) and awaiting the marriage day. God wants every saved person to remain pure and innocent from all other gods and have no activity or intercourse with them. Matthew 25:1-13, (the story of the ten virgins).

C. The Bible classifies a divorced Christian lady as unmarried. The prefix "un" means to reverse or revert back. Divorce or the termination of a marriage is sometimes necessary because of sin. It should never be considered unless there is **no other alternative**. God hates divorce and only permits it when there is no way the marriage can glorify Jesus. Divorce is the destruction of one of God's institutions by mankind and is just as devastating as having ungodly people destroy a church. Divorce should only become an option when a woman is faced with having to choose between her husband and God.

1. When a divorce is legally issued, the divorced Christian lady is no longer married nor is she bound to any laws pertaining to marriage. Deut. 24:3-4, "And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD: and thou shalt not cause the land to sin, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance."

Once a Christian lady is divorced, the man that she was married to is no longer called her husband, but called the former husband. When a divorce is decreed it is legally binding and God no longer recognizes the Christian lady as married.

2. A divorced Christian lady has the freedom to remarry. I Corinthians 7:8-9, "I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, It is good for them if they abide even as I. But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn." When a Christian lady becomes unmarried (divorced) or is a widow, she has the freedom to remarry provided she still has an active sex drive which will enable her to be a proper wife to a new husband. I Corinthians 7:27-28 "Art thou bound unto a wife? seek not to be loosed. Art thou loosed from a wife? seek not a wife. But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned. Nevertheless such shall have trouble in the flesh: but I spare you."
 3. The Bible places divorced Christian ladies and Christian widows in the same category. Leviticus 22:13, "But if the priest's daughter be a widow, or divorced, and have no child, and is returned unto her father's house, as in her youth, she shall eat of her father's meat: but there shall be no stranger eat thereof." Under the levitical law a divorced woman had the same rights as a widow.
 4. Every divorced Christian lady will individually answer to God for the commitments she makes just the same as a widow. Numbers 30:9, "But every vow of a widow, and of her that is divorced, wherewith they have bound their souls, shall stand against her." A widow or divorced Christian lady had the right to make contracts on her own and she was bound to them.
- D. The Bible gives specific instructions regarding the treatment of those Christian ladies who have lost their husbands by death (widows).
1. God promises to get involved when a Christian widow is afflicted by others and calls upon Him for help. Exodus 22:22-23, "Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise,

and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry;"

2. God said He would establish the boundaries of the Christian widows. Proverbs 15:25, "The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow." God takes special recognition of Christian widows and gives them special protection.
3. God recognizes the work or ministry of Christian widows based on their heart attitude, not their marital status. Mark 12:42-43, "And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which make a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury:"
4. God instructed the churches to honor Christian widows if they were widows indeed. I Timothy 5:3-4, "Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children or nephews, let them learn first to shew piety (obligation) at home, and to requite (reciprocate) their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God." A Christian widow indeed was one whose life had been given to glorify God.
 - a. She had to be at least 60 years old. I Timothy 5:9, "Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man."
 - b. Her sex drive had to have been extinguished. I Timothy 5:11, "But the younger widows refuse: for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry;" (wax wanton: to become voluptuous against); (voluptuous: conducive to or arising from sensuous or sensual gratification). A widow who still needs sexual gratification will burn in her need for physical satisfaction, and possibly turn against Christ to seek fulfillment from earthly activities.
 - c. She had to have no family to care for her. I Timothy 5:16, "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed."

5. A Christian lady whose husband has died is free from any laws that pertained to marriage. Romans 7:2, "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband."

III. Satan used deception to tempt Eve to follow him. He still uses this same method today as he tries to deceive women into following him and his ways. A Christian lady should understand these primary ways of deception used by Satan to destroy the home.

- A. Satanic forces still try to deceive Christian ladies with good words and fair speeches. Romans 16:18 "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Ephesians 5:6 "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience."
- B. Worldly philosophy tries to deceive Christian ladies with empty words. Colossians 2:8 "Beware lest any man spoil you through **philosophy** and vain **deceit**, after the **tradition of men**, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The world system says many things that sound good but have no evidence or proof that what they say is correct. (evolution, dating items, mental illness, etc).
- C. False "Christians" try to deceive Christian ladies into following their ways but are exposed when they do not represent Christ and the Bible. II Corinthians 11:13 "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ."
- D. There are some who will try to deceive the Christian lady by subtle, sly, skilled trickery seeking to pull her away from God and His truth. They seek to change or destroy biblical doctrine. Ephesians 4:14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"
- E. A deceiver of Christian ladies is revealed by his actions. A Christian lady

should observe what a person does, who he is, and not just what he says. I John 3:7, "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous."

- F. A deceiver of Christian ladies operates from his wicked thoughts and his evil intent. Proverbs 12:5 "The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit." A Christian lady needs to pay attention to a person's thoughts and intents and consider where she will end up if she listens to his counsel.
- G. A deceiver of Christian ladies is one who uses folly (lack of good sense or normal economic expenditures and foresight) to draw a person to himself. Proverbs 14:8, "The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit." When someone starts bestowing gifts and special favors on a Christian lady she should be careful because the day may come when she is called upon to repay those gifts. He may require a compromising carnal loyalty or allegiance to himself and destroy a Christian lady's loyalty and allegiance to Christ.
- H. A deceiver of Christian ladies often uses alcoholic beverages or other controlling substances to assist him in gaining his objective. Proverbs 20:1 "Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise." All dealings with others should be with 100% clarity of mind. Therefore, any and all controlling substances should be avoided at all times.

IV. All women had an affliction brought upon their lives as a result of Eve following the deception of the devil. I Timothy 2:14, "And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." Genesis 3:16-17, "Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;"

Adam and Eve were not cursed but had to suffer the consequence of the curse

upon the ground. There were many in the Bible who were cursed by God starting with Cain in Genesis 4:11. Galatians 3:10 "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in **all** things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The Bible makes it clear that everyone who breaks the law is under God's curse which is eternal punishment (separated from God) unless God removes that curse through salvation. The afflictions placed upon Eve because of her transgression were:

- A. A Christian lady suffers in child bearing and delivery. "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children;" God told Eve that He was going to greatly multiply (increase) her sorrow (worrisomeness, labor or pain). He also said He was going to multiply or increase her conceptions but she would bring forth her children in sorrow. Along with the amazing reality and delight of bringing a child into the world came an overshadowing of labor, pain, and worry.
- B. A Christian lady will desire her husband. "and thy desire shall be to thy husband" (desire - to run or stretch out after; longing) The Hebrew word translated 'desire' was only used three times in the Bible and, surprisingly, does not carry a sexual connotation. Many times sex is used as a placebo (especially by lost women) trying to fulfill this 'desire'. God gave all women a longing (a strong yearning or craving) for a man, causing them to follow after men.

This same desire, when not fulfilled, also causes great loneliness in women, which is usually diagnosed as depression. Over ninety percent of patients taking Prozac (or a similar drug) are women. Many teenage girls get involved in sexual activities trying to fulfill this desire but to no avail. This desire is also evidenced by women crying when they are alone or lonely and seem to cry for no apparent reason. When asked why they are crying, they usually don't know why. All they know is that they "want something" but can't explain what it is. A Christian wife needs to have a good relationship with her husband to help fulfill this 'desire'.

When God created Adam and Eve He created them as one. Eve was taken from Adam and they functioned as one. When the fall took place, that

single existence was divided and ever since then women have had the desire to regain that oneness. God stated that her desire would be to her husband, but he will never be able to fulfill it completely. Originally, that desire had been filled by God as He walked daily with them. **A proper personal relationship with the Lord, as well as her husband, is the only way a woman can fulfill this desire for oneness.**

- C. A Christian lady is placed under the authority of her husband because of sin. "and he shall rule over thee". When God created Adam and Eve and placed them in the garden, there was already positional strength but without sin. God said that Eve was created as Adam's "help meet" (surround, aid, or protect). Eve was created to be a helper or aid to Adam, not to be a competitor or a hindrance. When Eve followed the serpent she hindered Adam and violated the position God had established for her. Because of the fall, God told her she was being placed under the rule of Adam. God still intends for wives to be a "help meet" to their husbands. However, the temptation is still the same, which is to make individualized decisions, not considering the consequences it will have on a husband or God's ministry. I Timothy 2:11, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection." God still wants Christian wives to be assistants to their husbands, assuming the position of helper.

- V. **A Christian lady should understand the significance of all vows, especially marriage vows.** Ecclesiastes 5:4-5, "When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay. Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?"

In times of difficulty it is the power of vows that have been taken which carries a Christian lady through difficulties. When she gives a promise and establishes a commitment, she will remember it and do everything she can to carry it through to completion. Remember the marriage vows.

CONCLUSION

Marriage was established by God for the purpose of fulfilling his plan on the earth for inhabiting it. Any departure from celibacy before marriage; any improper departure from His institution of marriage; and any departure from glorifying God through the home, is a rebellious act of rejecting God, His plans, and His authority. At a time when there is a great departure from God, it is vital for Christian ladies to turn to God and commit stronger than ever to fulfilling God's plan.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Proverbs 31:11-12

"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

REBECCA

Read Genesis 24:1-67; 25:20-26:11; 27:1-46; Romans 9:1-14

Sarah and Abraham did not want a wife for their son Isaac to be from the people of the land in which they dwelt. So they sent a servant to get a wife from their own people. The servant recognized Rebecca as the right woman by an agreement he had made with God. The agreement was based on finding a woman who was willing to help and serve others.

- A. Rebecca did not have a special leading from the Lord to draw water for the camels; it was her character to help others.

Question: Is it in your character to assist others? What are some of the things you do that helps others?

_____.

- B. Rebecca was willing to go with the servant of Abraham on a moments notice, after her father and brother recognized that he was from God.

Question: Do you tend to act as an individual when trying to

determine if a life decision is of God, or do you seek advice from others in your life that would recognize the workings of God? Who are some of the people you would seek advice from?

-
- C. Rebecca is mentioned in the book of Romans regarding the fact that all those born of Abraham are not Israelites, and not all were the children of God. Only those born of the promise are the children of God.

Question: How important are the promises of God to you? What are some of the things you do in seeking to fulfill the promises of God?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE: BRIDE OF CHRIST

Read II Corinthians 11:1-4; Ephesians 5:22-33; Matthew 22:1-14; 25:1-13;
Romans 7:1-4; Revelation 19:5-9; 21:1-9; 22:17

Paul wrote to the church at Corinth and stated that he had espoused the church to Christ, wanting to present it to Him as a chaste virgin. The day a person accepts Christ as personal Savior she becomes espoused and will be part of the Bride of Christ.

- A. Paul had a fear that others would come and preach another Jesus, who is not the Son and is not the Bridegroom. He was afraid that Christ's bride would be beguiled (seduced wholly) like Eve was and that her mind would be corrupted (to spoil or ruin).

Question: Have you fully accepted the Bible as God's word and committed yourself to following it until you meet Jesus? What are you doing to keep that commitment stabilized.

- B. In Ephesians the Bible says that wives are to submit to their own earthly husbands as the church is submitted to Christ. He also said that wives should reverence (to be in awe; respect) their husband.

Question: Do you recognize the position that God has given your husband or your future husband? What are you doing as his help meet (or future help meet) to assist him in fulfilling the responsibilities God has given

him?

- C. In the book of Romans, it is explained that a lost person cannot be the bride of Christ because she is bound (or married) to the law and would be committing adultery. A woman must be dead to the law that she may be married to a second husband (Christ).

Question: Do you recognize that your first marriage to the law is dead and you should never go back to it with its condemnation and destruction? Do you have the freedom to be a good fiancé to Christ and live your life expecting and planning for your wedding day? What are some of the wedding plans you have made?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION TWO - HOME LIFE

Lesson Seven

LOVING YOUR HUSBAND-GOD'S WAY

INTRODUCTION

There are many verses in the Bible dealing with how a husband is to love his wife. The greatest instruction is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, Ephesians 5:25, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;". If husbands are to love their wives as Christ loved the church then *wives should love their husbands as the church loves Christ*. The Bible tells the older women to teach the young women to love their husband, Titus 2:4, "That they may teach the young women to be sober, **to love their husbands**, to love their children". This verse implies that the young wives do not know how to correctly love their husbands (the way God wants them to love them). This indicates one of the reasons there is such dysfunction and failure in marriages today. There has also been a great breakdown in how churches love Christ. Consequently, wives do not have a good example to follow. Ephesians 5:33, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

It is very easy for a woman to justify her wrong actions by pointing at her husband and his shortcomings. Whether or not a husband is doing right does not give the wife the freedom to disobey God. **A godly lady is to do right no matter what her husband does.** The governing force for her actions should be Christ, not mankind, including her husband. Two wrongs will never make things right. Much of discipleship is used to criticize others rather than produce personal growth and godliness. This lesson is not about what a husband should do but what a Christian wife should do. She should love her husband and show him reverence.

A Christian lady must know what makes her a Christian wife and the value God places upon her. A godly wife is important enough to God that He wrote a chapter in the

Bible for all to see. When a Christian lady is a godly wife the following verses from Proverbs thirty-one describes her:

* A Christian wife's value to her husband is far above the value of anything on this earth. Proverbs 31:10, □Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."

* A Christian wife has virtue (having resources such as wealth, valor, or strength) so that her husband has no need for riches. Proverbs 31:11, □The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil." (spoil - a rich gain or prize)

* A Christian wife does her husband good all the days of her life. Proverbs 31:12, □She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."

* The Christian wife's husband is recognized as blessed because of his wife. Proverbs 31:23, Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land." Every husband should be fortunate enough to be known as the husband of the virtuous godly lady.

* The Christian wife's husband, as well as others, recognizes her as being strong and controlled by honor. Proverbs 31:25, "Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come." God wants godly wives to be soft but not weak; honorable and not sinful, prepared for the future and not worried or scared.

* The Christian wife speaks with kindness and wisdom. Proverbs 31:26, "She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness." One kind word will always accomplish more than a thousand harsh or angry ones.

* The Christian wife's husband gives her praise calling her blessed. Proverbs 31:28, "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." A Christian lady wants praise but she wants honest praise, not vain puffed up lies. A Christian lady is one that is praise worthy.

* A Christian wife fears God and follows his instructions gaining praise of Him as well as her husband. Proverbs 31:30, "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised." External beauty easily deteriorates and should not be trusted. A Christian lady fears the Lord, will follow His ways and be praised for her character and life.

For a Christian man there is nothing on this earth greater than having a virtuous godly wife to help him accomplish the work God has directed for his life. There is no greater vocation on this earth for a Christian lady than being a godly wife.

I. A Christian wife must love her husband. Love is the greatest Christian identification. When love is absent from a church or a family, the word "Christian" should not be applied because it is missing the greatest character of Christ. A Christian wife possesses the loving character of Jesus and is controlled from within by who she is on the inside and not controlled by other people or their actions.

A. A Christian lady must love her husband with the spiritual love (agape) given to her by God.

1. A Christian lady who loves will bond with her husband. Colossians 3:14, "And above all these things put on charity, *which is the bond of perfectness.*" It is the perfect love of God that will bond two people together and will endure all circumstances.

2. A Christian lady who walks in the love of God will give herself as a sacrifice. Ephesians 5:2, "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour." To walk in love means that the direction in life is determined by the love that God gave to each of His children.

3. A Christian lady who loves is likeminded with Jesus. Philippians 2:2, "Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Having the same mind and love that Jesus has causes husbands and wives to be of one accord and one mind. It is never an issue of which one is right. The important issue is that Jesus is right and that He be glorified.

B. A Christian lady must love her husband with brotherly love (phileo). The following verses use the Greek word for brotherly or friendship love. A Christian lady is a friend to her husband and should be his best friend.

1. A Christian lady loves her husband with action, not just words. John 21:17, "He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my

sheep." Jesus let Peter know that if he had brotherly love for Him he would not only say that he loved Him but also **do** what the Lord asked. A godly lady will put her love into action for all to see.

2. A Christian lady loves her husband and gives up her individual life for him. John 15:13-14, "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." This does not mean to physically die for a friend, but to change living an individual life (self-centered) to living a life for others. A Christian wife is one who loves others enough to deny her individual identity to first become identified with Christ and then with her husband.

C. A Christian lady loves her husband with physical love (eros). God created Adam and Eve with the ability and desire to have sexual intimacy. In society today, sexual activity has become the most misused and perverted contact between two people. There is little or no regard for what God created sex to be. A Christian lady needs to understand what God intended when He created men and women with the ability and need to be sexually active.

1. There is much more involved in a sexual act than just a physical relationship. Proverbs 6:32-33, "But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding; he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away." This verse makes it clear that when a person commits a sexual act forbidden by God a **soul** is destroyed. I Corinthians 6:18, "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." God said that every sin a man commits is outside the body but sexual sin is against (or in) the body. These verses also indicate that sex is more than just a physical act. One author said that ***sexual intercourse causes a lost person to experience a temporary oneness with another person that resembles the permanent oneness a saved person experiences with Jesus Christ.*** People hunger for oneness with God and often substitute the physical for the spiritual. Lives are often destroyed with sexual activities, never knowing what they have done or the long range consequences. Sexual intercourse is not just the joining of two bodies; it is also the joining of two souls.

2. The Bible does say that sexual intercourse between a husband and

wife is two bodies becoming one flesh (flesh is the human life as opposed to the soul or spirit). Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." (joined - to glue, to adhere, cleave) Becoming one sexually is approved by God only after a man and woman are joined together in marriage.

3. Becoming one sexually is a physical example of being one spiritually with Christ. The physical relationship is significantly influenced by a Christian's relationship with Jesus Christ. Redbook magazine did a survey of 100,000 women and found that strongly religious women were the most sexually satisfied. It observed that these women were more fulfilled because of their security in God and were not seeking to find completeness in the sex act alone. I Corinthians 6:17, "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." The word joined used here is the same word that is used when a man and woman have sex. A Christian lady is to be one with Christ or she will never experience God's purpose of oneness with her husband.

II. A Christian wife's desire is to her husband. In Genesis 3:16 God pronounced His direction to Eve because she had allowed her personal desire to act alone, and did not follow or consult with her husband. One part of His declaration was that her desire would be to her husband. A Christian wife wants her husband to be complete in every area of his life and gains great personal fulfillment when her husband accomplishes this.

A. A Christian wife desires to provide her husband with companionship. Genesis 2:18, "And the LORD God said, *It is not good that the man should be alone;...*" God created Eve to be a wife and a companion to her husband because He knew that man would not be fulfilled if he was alone. A Christian wife spends time with her husband, goes places with him, shares her life with him, and talks with him because she enjoys discussing the things of their lives.

"...*I will make him an help meet for him.*" God created Eve to be a wife and to be a help meet to her husband. A help meet is one who is aware of her husband's needs and desires and tries to fulfill them with a right attitude. A help meet is one who protects and encompasses. A help meet seeks to carry out her husband's instructions but does not try to

assume her husband's responsibilities. A Christian lady is one who helps and protects but does not tear down and destroy her husband. Being a help meet to her husband is different from mothering because of the position of authority. As a mother to her children, she has the authority to tell or even demand that her children do things. As a help meet to her husband, she should advise or encourage him to do what is right. A mother has the authority *over* her children but a wife and help meet is *under* her husband. With her children she is the supervisor, but with the husband she is respectful.

B. A Christian wife desires to help her husband reach the lost with the knowledge of Christ, to bring them into the family of God. Genesis 1:28, "And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (The primary definition of the word replenish is to fill or be full and the secondary definition is to fill again) The earth still needs to be reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ and every Christian wife helps her husband accomplish this.

C. A Christian wife desires to help her husband by showing him reverence. Ephesians 5:33, "Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband." (Reverence - to show devoted deferential honor to; regard as worthy of great honor). There are times a man may not deserve to be honored, but his position of husband deserves honor because God established that position of authority. A Christian wife should show reverence to her husband at all times. She should not talk down to him, belittle him, or tear him down.

III. A Christian wife must fully commit herself to her husband. The Bible instructs a husband to leave his parents and cleave (or join) unto his wife. One of the greatest detriments to marriage is a parent intervening, trying to impose their beliefs and values upon their married children, and the married children allowing this to happen. When a man and woman marries, the Bible makes it clear they are to establish a new home and a new family with a new person in authority. This does not mean they cannot ask their parents for advice or even help, but never to the extent that the new home is placed in

bondage or under servanthood to the parents.

A. A Christian wife commits to her husband by **leaving** her mother and father. The first instruction God gave to Adam and Eve regarding mankind and marriage was that a married couple is to leave their father and mother. Genesis 2:24, "*Therefore shall a man **leave** his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*" □ When a Christian lady becomes a wife, she is to redirect her allegiance and accountability to her new home, with her husband as its head. If she does not do this, her continued allegiance to her parents will destroy her new home. This has nothing to do with whether the parents are good or bad, but has everything to do with God's instructions and His authority.

B. A Christian wife commits herself by **cleaving** to her husband. Genesis 2:24, "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, *and shall **cleave** unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*" The woman who marries is not only to leave her parents, but she is also to **cleave** (to adhere firmly and closely or loyally and unwaveringly) to her husband. Cleave also means the point where two are joined and is often used to describe the area between a woman's breasts (cleavage). God intended that this joining be a permanent union which should last until the death of either the wife or her husband.

C. In the New Testament, Jesus repeated the instruction for a bride and groom to leave their parents, adding that no man was to divide the two apart. Matthew 19:4-6, "And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Jesus made it clear that the bride and groom was to form a new family and be separated from their parents. God repeated the same instructions to members of a New Testament church. Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh." These same instructions God gave in the Bible are still in effect today.

D. A Christian lady commits herself by keeping herself pure from the world and not allowing friendships to draw her back into the world. James 4:4, "Ye adulterers and

adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." Many times friends or so-called friends use their ties with the Christian wife to pull her into the world and its sins. A great number of young Christian ladies have been destroyed with statements like "if you love me", "just one drink with us", "just one time won't hurt you", "do you think you are better than I am" , "no one else will ever know", and other assertive conditional statements using their friendship to draw a Christian lady back to the world.

E. A Christian wife commits physically to her husband. Mark 10:7-9. "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Two separate bodies are joined together forming one, never to be independent again. I Corinthians 7:5, "Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency." (incontinent--lacking self-restraint, not able to control ones own body function).

A Christian wife is committed to her husband and is exclusively one with him. I Corinthians 6:16, "When a man is joined to a harlot he becomes one body with her." The word "joining" used in this verse means sexual intercourse and says that a man becomes one with the person he's "joined" with. When a Christian lady marries, she commits to her husband and rejects all others. She should not even allow her imagination to wander away from her commitment. II Corinthians 10:5, "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;" Uncontrolled imagination will form its own morality above what God says in His word.

IV. A Christian wife submits herself to her husband. Colossians 3:18, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." Submission begins in the heart and follows with actions of obedience. When a Christian wife submits to her husband she chooses to place herself under his position or office of husband. When the Bible makes reference to physical submission it is making reference to sexual activity. God

intended that wives should submit to their husbands in many areas including sexual fulfillment. There are many hindrances the world tries to interject into Christian marriages, which hinders a Christian wife from submitting to her husband.

A. A Christian wife's submission is hindered by wrong religious teachings. Hebrews 13:4, "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." There are churches that teach sex itself is sin by using the verse in Psalms 51 where David said in sin he was conceived. There are many other religions that teach sex is a taboo subject, consequently, condemning sex (which God created) implying that it is wrong.

B. A Christian wife's submission is influenced by wrong teaching and motives from parents. Ephesians 5:6, "Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience." Many times mothers teach their daughters that sex is a necessary evil, due to their ignorance about sex or some misdirected sinful sex act that happened to them or someone they know (pre-marital sex, rape, incest, homosexuality, sexual abuse, or unfulfilled sex). They also condemn sex itself in an attempt to keep their daughters from becoming sexually active before marriage instead of properly educating them from the Word of God. II Corinthians 4:2, "But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."

C. A Christian wife's submission is restricted by wrong priority or selfishness. Many wives do not want to fulfil their husband's sexual needs because they are selfish or lazy. They look for an excuse not to have sex and tend to adhere to the "headache" syndrome. A Christian lady should ask herself if her present condition is bad enough to keep her from doing other activities such as going to work, doing house work, shopping, or entertaining others? Where does a wife's priorities lie in submitting herself to her husband's physical needs? When a wife does not submit to her husband (just because she does not want to) this is showing a selfish attitude and does not comply with submission. A Christian wife should never be guilty of "crying wolf" because the day may come when she really is sick and her husband will not believe her. Colossians 3:9, "Lie not one to another,

seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds;" Proverbs 12:17, "He that speaketh truth sheweth forth righteousness: but a false witness deceit."

D. A Christian wife's submission is affected by failure to recognize sex for what it is. When God created the woman He knew what He was doing. It is not a mistake that God made her physically the way she is. There is nothing that can take place between a husband and wife that can make them feel closer than having a healthy sexual relationship. When a wife wants to be close to and one with her husband, she will find the fulfillment she needs through a sexual relationship. Ephesians 5:22, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

V. A Christian wife should understand that God created the female body (vessel) as it pleased Him. God created the bodies of men and women differently (and not just the reproductive parts). A Christian lady needs to take care of her body as God created it and not try to make it masculine. Her body is the vessel she lives in and is also a vessel that God lives in. Her vessel should always be honoring to her Lord.

- A. Christian lady should not consider herself equal in physical strength to a man. God made the male and the female bodies differently and He gave the male body greater strength. Even though the woman is physically weaker ***does not mean that she is weaker emotionally, mentally, or spiritually.*** I Peter 3:7, "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered." God told husbands to treat their wives as weaker vessels realizing that they are also heirs of God. A Christian wife should allow her husband to do the hard or heavy tasks and resist the temptation to compete with him. *Never under any circumstances should a wife do physical battle with her husband.* If a husband intentionally violates God's character and inflicts physical pain on his wife, she should not retaliate, but should remove herself from him.
- B. The Christian wife should sanctify her vessel and keep it clean in order to glorify God. I Thessalonians 4:4, "That every one of you should know how to

possess his vessel in sanctification and honour;" A Christian lady should not allow her vessel to become polluted with sin or filth. She always keep herself clean in order to perfect holiness. II Corinthians 7:1, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, *let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

CONCLUSIONCONCLUSIONCONCLUSIONCONCLUSION

When a man and woman are joined together as husband and wife, they form a new institution under the authority of God, independent from their parents. The Christian wife is a help meet and companion to her husband. Marriage is a great experience when it is done God's way. When it fails to follow God's instructions, it will be a miserable and heartbreaking relationship in which to live. A Christian wife should never become independent or selfish placing her wants above God's. A Christian wife should commit herself to God and His ways and help her husband do all he can to lead their home toward godliness. Marriage requires teamwork of a husband and wife working together to accomplish God's desires for an earthly Christian environment.

God showed us in the Scripture that when a Christian lady lives a godly life of loving her husband it could cause even a lost husband to come to Christ. I Peter 3:1, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;" Of all the contacts that a Christian lady has with other people, there is none greater than the contact she has with her husband. Her influence and guidance plays a major part in what her home represents.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Ephesians 5:22-24

"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

SARAH

Read Genesis 11:29-31; 12:5-17; 16:1-8; 17:15-21; 18:1-19 20:2-18; 21:1-12; 23:1-19; 24:36-37; 25:10-12; 49:31; Isaiah 51:2; Romans 4:19; 9:9; Hebrews 11:11; I Peter 3:6.

Sarah was a woman who loved her husband (Abraham) and followed him at all times. There were many situations in their lives but each time Sarah chose to fulfill her husband's wishes.

- A. In Genesis 12 Abram took Sarai with him when they departed from Haran. They went to a place with only God knowing their destination.

Question: Are you willing to follow your husband (or future husband) as God leads him? Where would you be willing to go or not go to be with your husband?

- B. In Genesis 12 Abram told his wife to tell the Egyptians that she was his sister (which she was, Genesis 20:12) to save his life.

Question: What would you be willing to do or give up to save your husband's (or future husband's) life? What is his value or worth to you?

- C. In Genesis 17 God changed Sarai's name to Sarah and told Abraham that she was going to have a child at the age of ninety. In Genesis 21 Sarah having that son blessed Abraham.

Question: How much do you believe God will do what He said He would do? How is your husband (future husband) being blessed by your trust in God?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

ELIZABETH

Read Luke 1:5-80.

Elizabeth was a woman who was recognized with her husband as being righteous. Their relationship was pleasing to God.

- A. Elizabeth was a righteous woman before the Lord and walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelessly.

Question: If God were to describe your life today how do you think He would describe you and why?

- B. Elizabeth conceived in her old age and hid herself for five months saying that the Lord had taken away her reproach (shame) among men by giving her a child.

Question: When others look upon your life, do they see that God is blessing you? Explain.

- C. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost and recognized the works of God. After giving birth to John, she followed God's instructions regarding what to do with him.

Question: Do you recognize the workings of God in other peoples lives as well as your own and what do you do to follow his instructions?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION II - HOME LIFE

Lesson Eight

LOVING CHILDREN—GOD'S WAY

INTRODUCTION

How to raise children is one of the most controversial subjects of today. In most of the teachings one major part of raising children is neglected, and that is how parents are to love their children. In the book of Titus, Paul instructed the older women to teach the younger women to love their children, Titus 2:4, "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children," Children will suffer the consequences of inadequate life development unless there is systematic mentoring of the older ladies teaching the younger ladies to love their children. This lesson is written to teach mothers God's way of loving their children, not just raising them.

There is a lot of teaching today stating that children should be allowed to develop into what they choose, and that parents should leave them alone. The Bible tells us that a child left to himself will bring shame to his mother. Proverbs 29:15b "a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame." *Children are not capable of deciding what to do with their lives.* If children cannot make the decisions regarding direction in their lives, then who makes the decisions? Teachers? Siblings? Neighbors? Religious leaders? Friends? Politicians? Perverts? Drug peddlers? Television or movie stars? God entrusted parents with children. Why shouldn't parents make the decision?

Children do not know how to develop in their lives the things that will be expected of them when they become adults. A mother must love her children and invest the necessary time to develop their lives. I Corinthians 13:11, "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Love causes a mother to accept her children where they are and devote herself to assist them in advancing to the next stage in life. Selfishness will cause a mother to look at

her own needs and desires and resent or reject her children. Mothering children is the most important occupation, the most difficult job, the hardest trial, the greatest joy, the most fulfilling experience, and the most extreme emotional roller coaster a person will ever experience.

A mother molds her children's character more than any other person does. Timothy's mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, were greatly responsible for Timothy's character. II Timothy 1:5, "When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also." II Timothy 3:15, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Children develop more from their mother's actions than their mother's teachings. They become like their parents (or someone else), and not what they are told to become. Ezekiel 16:44, "Behold, every one that useth proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As is the mother, so is her daughter."

I. **A loving Christian lady is a steward (caretaker) for God assigned to mature His children.** Children are a gift from God and placed in the care of parents that they might be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Ephesians 6:4b "but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (nurture - disciplinary correction, training)(admonition - calling attention to, mild rebuke or warning) It is the parents' responsibility to train their children to be godly.

A. A Christian mother receives her children in the name of Jesus Christ. Matthew 18:1-6, "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And *whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me*. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a

millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." Mark 9:36-37, "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, *Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me.*" Jesus said that when a person receives a child in the name of Jesus he is receiving Him and the One that sent Him. It is very crucial that Christian mothers accept their own children in the name of Jesus.

- B. A Christian mother realizes that her children do not know how to reject evil. Isaiah 7:16, "For *before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good*, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." A Christian mother should shelter her children from evil until she has taught them to reject it and knows they understand.
- C. A Christian mother knows that childhood itself is a process and not a goal. Ecclesiastes 11:10, "Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for *childhood and youth are vanity.*" Childhood is not something to be sought after but departed from. There are many that say "let children be children" but childhood is empty and non-productive. Children get comfortable in the stage of development they are in and must have demands and expectations placed upon them to make them work to achieve the next level of development. On the other hand, Christian mothers should be careful and not have too high of expectations that a child cannot accomplish due to age and maturity.
- D. A Christian mother should not direct her children toward power and riches but toward wisdom. Ecclesiastes 4:13, "*Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.*"
- E. A Christian mother knows that a rebellious child will be hurt by the sin he follows. Isaiah 30:1-3, "*Woe to the rebellious children, saith the LORD, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they may add sin to sin: That walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of*

Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt! Therefore shall the strength of Pharaoh be your shame, and the trust in the shadow of Egypt your confusion."

- F. A Christian mother is one who keeps her children under obedience to their parents. Ephesians 6:1 "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right." Colossians 3:20 "Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." It is right and pleases God when children obey their parents. It is clear that it is neither right nor pleasing to God when children are unruly and misbehave.

II. A loving Christian lady cares for the children God placed in her stewardship. Life should be dedicated to the permanent, not the temporary. Children are more important than the house. Time is more important than money.

- A. A Christian mother makes sure her children know that she loves them. It is very important that all the children know that their mother's love will never end. Some Christian children go the way of the world because the only love they ever saw from their "Christian parents" was worldly love. They never saw the love of God demonstrated. Proverbs 4:3, "For I was my father's son, *tender and only beloved in the sight of my mother.*"
- B. A Christian mother makes sure she leaves something to her children and her grandchildren. Proverbs 13:22, "*A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children:* and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just." **A Christian mother leaves not just money but she leaves a life for her descendants to follow.** Proverbs 22:1, "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold."
- C. A Christian mother does not see her children as a burden and strives to never be a burden to them. II Corinthians 12:14, "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours but you: *for the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*" Paul made it clear in I Timothy 5 that the children were to provide for their mothers but a mother's attitude should be not to burden, if

at all possible.

II. **A loving Christian lady disciplines the children in her care.**

The word discipline comes from the word disciple, which means *to make followers*.

When a parent administers discipline, the question is **to whom or what are they developing the child to follow.**

A. A Christian mother disciplines her children with proper training. Webster's dictionary says that discipline is *training that corrects, molds, or perfects* the mental faculties or moral character. Discipline is training. The word 'train' means to follow one after another and a good example is a train that runs on a railroad. Each car has to follow the car in front of it because they are on the same track and pulled by the same engine. Before training can take place, there must be a road to follow and predecessors to walk ahead of the children. Remember children end up where their leaders take them.

1. Discipline a child away from foolishness. Proverbs 22:15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the *rod of correction* shall drive it far from him."
2. Discipline a child toward wisdom. Proverbs 29:15, "*The rod and reproof give wisdom*: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."
3. Discipline children to be under the control of those in authority. Galatians 4:1-3, "Now I say, That the heir, *as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant*, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:"
4. Discipline a child as an act of love. Proverbs 13:24, "He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but *he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes*." (betimes-early or immediately, it does not mean many times). Children have not developed reason or logic and delayed

chastening does not work. Immediate correction is important for their understanding.

5. Discipline a child with dependability. Proverbs 23:13 "*Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die.*" It is important that children learn that wrong action will be followed by corrective action by their mothers.

B. A Christian mother disciplines her children with chastisement. Webster's dictionary states that *chastisement is to correct by punishment or suffering*. God said that if there was no chastening from God then the person was not His child. Hebrews 12:5-8, "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." A mother who does not chastise her children is denying them and treating them as if they belong to someone else.

1. Chastisement is not pleasant when it happens, but its fruit is righteousness. Hebrews 12:11, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."
2. Chastisement causes a child to do what is right. Proverbs 20:11, "Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right."
3. Chastisement prevents children from following every fad or teaching that comes along. Ephesians 4:14, "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of

doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"

IV. A loving Christian lady is responsible to God for how she loves her children.

- A. When a Christian lady is the mother God instructed, her children will call her blessed. Proverbs 31:28-30, "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised." The virtuous woman in Proverbs recognized that having the favor of people or having beauty was not the important issue; the issue was fearing the Lord that made her important.
- B. A Christian mother puts her children above her personal wants and needs. I Kings 3:16-27 "Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before the king. Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before

the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof." The king knew who the real mother was because she put the child's safety above her own needs and desires. The false mother was only concerned about her own needs and was willing to sacrifice the child's life to have those needs fulfilled.

- C. A Christian mother is not to judge her children. Webster's dictionary says that *judging is to develop an estimate or evaluation of*; especially to form a negative opinion. Judgment is different from discernment in that a declaration of a person's state of life is made. A mother passes judgment on her children when she says, "**you are**" instead of referring to what the child has done or how the child reacted. When a mother passes judgment on her children she uses something or someone as a measuring instrument. Every child is different, created by God, and should not be judged by comparing with other children. The Bible establishes that the only measurement to use is whether or not a person is like Christ. God has a place and ministry for every child. A good example of judging a child is found in I Samuel 16 when David was excluded by his father and brothers because he was different, yet God made him king.

V. **A loving Christian lady trains her children to be like God.**

- A. A Christian mother should determine what her children are going to become, then lead and direct them on the path she has chosen.
1. Proverbs 22:6, "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." It is important that mothers instruct

their children regarding the direction they are to go. Mothers should be careful regarding descriptive words because her children might believe them and become what they were called. This verse does not say that a child will come back because he was raised right. It says he will not depart. Many mothers teach their children about God and the Bible, but fail to direct their way. Many times mothers will say "I raised them God's way" but when asked to describe that way they can not. Every Christian mother should have in writing the way she is taking her children and understand the end results.

2. Proverb 29:17-18, "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul. Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he." The verse often quoted regarding having no vision is dealing with children. It would not be incorrect to say that where there is no vision the children depart from the Lord and end up without happiness.

B. When a Christian mother does not show reverent respect to God the children will not fear Him. Proverbs 14:26, "In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge." A Christian mother does not disregard God's instructions regarding her life because if she does it causes her children to disrespect and not fear God. The following is some of the most common verses mothers violate and, consequently, shows disrespect for God.

- * Hebrews 10:25 " Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together"
- * I Peter 3:10, "let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:
- * Ephesians 5:3, "But covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;
- * I Thessalonians 5:22, "Abstain from all appearance of evil."
- * Ephesians 5:15-16, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools,

but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

When children fear God they have a place of refuge, but when there is no fear of God, they fall into all kinds of mischief and sin.

- C. A Christian mother does not wait until her children are adults to train them for ministry. A good example of this is Hannah and how she promised God she would give Him Samuel for the ministry. As a child, Samuel followed the Lord in ministry instead of the way of the wicked priest Eli. I Samuel 2:11, "And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest." 2:18, "But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. 3:1, "And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision."

VI. A Christian lady recognizes the importance of the influence of the father on the children.

- A. A Christian mother must realize that her children will glorify their father. Proverbs 17:6, "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers." A mother must be careful not to belittle or defile her children's glory (their father) or she will lose her children. A mother should be very careful not to make her children choose between her and her husband. Young children think their father is the strongest, smartest, wisest, and all around best at everything. As they get older they will figure out he is not, but let **them** figure it out.
- B. A Christian mother needs to know that children learn from living people. Isaiah 38:19 "The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the

father to the children shall make known thy truth." Fathers help to make God's

truth known to the children. If a mother does not have a husband to help her teach the children, it is crucial that she keep them in church to be around Christian men who will influence them to know the truth of God.

- C. A Christian mother knows that one of the qualifications for church leadership is how a man leads his home. If a man's children do not follow him it is certain that the members of a church will not.
1. Bishops or pastors are to have their children in subjection. I Timothy 3:4, "One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;"
 2. Deacons must rule their children. I Timothy 3:12, "Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well."
- D. A Christian mother also understands the damage fathers can do to the children. A Christian mother encourages her husband to follow the way of God and works with him to develop their children in harmony.
1. Fathers can provoke children to wrath. Ephesians 6:4 "And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."
 2. Fathers can discourage children. Colossians 3:21, "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

CONCLUSION

The Bible makes it clear that a Christian mother is to love her children and if she fails she is disobeying God. The Bible also makes it clear that affection (tender attachment) is not the love God wants a mother to have. A mother should have affection for her children but not overriding proper love. For a Christian mother to love her children the way God

wants her to, she must do what is necessary to train and direct their lives in the way that God has chosen for them to follow. It is necessary for a Christian mother to do what God says in raising her children and make sure that "doing her best" is doing it God's way.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Proverbs 22:6

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

If you still have children directly under your care, write out the vision you have for them when they become adults. Explain how you are going to train up your children to reach that destination and what you are going to use to help them reach it.

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

JOCHEBED

Read Exodus 2:1-11; 6:20; Numbers 26:59; Hebrews 11:23-29

Jochebed and her husband were of the tribe of Levi (upon which God placed His priesthood). Jochebed was the mother of Moses and is best known for saving the life of her small infant son. When Moses was born, she saw that he was a "goodly child" and hid him for three months until he was too large to keep a secret (because of Pharaoh's law). She then put him in an ark and placed it in the river where Pharaoh's daughter found him. Pharaoh's daughter needed someone to nurse Moses and his mother was chosen. She continued to raise him until he was old enough to be placed in Pharaoh's daughter's hands.

- A. Jochebed disobeyed the law of the land to save her son. She knew that keeping Moses alive could bring much hardship and pain in her life but chose to put Moses' life above hers.

Question: Have you dedicated your life to God in regard to being a steward over the children He has placed in your care? If you have, explain how committed you are concerning giving of yourself for the welfare of your children?

- B. Jochebed had faith enough to follow God instead of man.

Question: As a mother, do you have enough faith in God to follow His instructions in raising your children. How has the fear of man (with his law) affected the way you raise your children and what have you done to correct it?

- C. Jochebed's influence was very great in Moses' life. Even though she only had him for a short time, she instilled in him the things of God. When Moses became an adult he chose to be with the people of God even though they were suffering affliction.

Question: At what age do you start instilling the virtues of God in your children? Explain how you can cause your small children to know that God's people are their people?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE

WOMAN OF CANAAN

Read Matthew 15:22-28; Mark 7:25-30

The woman of Canaan had a daughter who was vexed by a demon and sought Jesus to heal her daughter. The woman was a Greek and looked upon by the Jews as a dog. The disciples tried to send her away, but she insisted on seeing Jesus. When she came before Him, she fell at His feet. She gave up all her pride and arrogance for the sake of her child.

- A. The woman of Canaan sought Jesus on behalf of her daughter who was vexed with a devil. She did not go to Jesus seeking the fulfillment of her own needs; she went to Him because her daughter needed His power.

Question: When you pray for your children do you honestly seek help for them or do you seek relief for yourself? You need to seek God's power on yourself to know how to be a Christian mother, but you also need to seek His power for your children. Write a short example prayer asking God for His power on your children.

- B. The woman of Canaan broke all cultural boundaries when she came to Jesus. She went to Jesus, not with pride and arrogance, but as a dog eating the crumbs that the children dropped.

Question: Each person has cultural boundaries, to which pride and guilt attach, enslaving them to that culture. Do you have enough humility to take you across cultural boundaries? What are some of the cultural boundaries you must cross to seek the way of Christ?

- C. The woman of Canaan was referred to Jesus as a woman of great faith. Because of her faith in Him, Jesus healed her daughter.

Question: In what or in whom do you place your faith? Christian faith must be in the person of Jesus, not the prayer itself. Explain how you know that Jesus cares about your children and how you can trust Him (by faith) to work in their lives.

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies_{Error!}

Reference source not found.

DIVISION III - CHRISTIAN LIFE

Lesson Nine

CHARITY — A GIVING LIFE

INTRODUCTION

In the book of III John, John wrote to Gaius (his child in the faith) and told him that he rejoiced greatly when the brethren reported to him that Gaius was showing charity before the church. III John 3 & 6, "For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well:" Charity denotes a giving spirit. There are many problems that come into a lady's life with many varying consequences. The greatest virtue to lose is giving. If a lady becomes a taker, it will completely change her character and she will no longer properly represent Jesus Christ. The number one characteristic of God is His giving. All other gods or religions are takers. The main characteristic that makes others accept a lady as a Christian is her giving spirit. Without charity there is no Christian life.

I. A Christian lady needs to identify what charity is. There are a lot of counterfeits in the world today that claim to have charity. There are organizations that call their businesses charities when in reality they just want you to give to keep them functioning. They are not concerned about a givers motive. They are concerned only about the gift, and most of the time the person who gives is only looking for a tax deduction. Many churches convince their people to give by using law, guilt or promises of reward, which results in the destruction of charity in the process.

- A. A Christian lady recognizes charity. Charity is translated in the Bible from the Greek word *agape* which is godly love, affection, or benevolence. The dictionary defines charity as Christian love or benevolent goodwill toward or love of humanity. In both definitions *charity is giving expecting nothing in return.*
- B. A Christian lady does everything with charity as her motive. I Corinthians 16:14 "*Let all your things be done with charity.*" When a lady has charity as the primary character of her life, everything she does comes from charity. God told every Christian that they were to do everything with charity.
- C. A Christian lady's actions toward others is controlled by charity. I Timothy 1:5 "*Now the end of the commandment is charity* out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:" When a lady has charity there is no need for laws to control her actions because she is controlled from the inside. Law is external and was implemented to prevent taking. Romans 13:9
1. "Thou shalt not commit adultery," (taking another man's spouse)
 2. "Thou shalt not kill," (taking another person's life)
 3. "Thou shalt not steal," (taking another person's belongings)
 4. "Thou shalt not bear false witness," (taking another person's testimony)
 5. "Thou shalt not covet;" (wanting to take what belongs to another) "and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." (Deuteronomy 5:7,11,16)
 6. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (taking God's supreme position)
 7. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." (Taking away the reverence and holiness of God's name)
 8. "Honor thy father and thy mother." (Failure to honor takes away their authority)

The way God did away with the law was by sending charity. A lost person's life is still controlled by law, but a saved person should be controlled by charity or a giving spirit toward others.

- D. A Christian lady matures her own life by having charity. I Corinthians 8:1 "Now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but *charity edifieth.*" There are many who try to grow through knowledge only, but become big headed and leave Christianity with a bad name. Knowledge will not produce right action, only charity can do that. Knowledge is worthless unless it has godly actions attached.
- E. A Christian lady knows that charity causes her to be fruitful and she will lead others to Christ. II Peter 1:3-9 "According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness *charity.* For *if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful* in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins.

II. **A Christian lady must have charity or nothing she does will amount to anything with God.** When God judges the saved at the Judgement Seat of Christ, every work will be judged according to the heart's motive and the only motive acceptable with God is charity. Every work that is done with any other motive is worldly, selfish, carnal, and not godly. Works alone do not please God. Many women do things motivated by what they are going to get, and not motivated by godly giving.

- A. A Christian lady knows the value of charity. It is charity that makes her a

functioning Christian, without it she is nothing. In the eyes of God, a lady's value comes from godly giving and nothing else. I Corinthians 13:1-3

1. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." Even if a lady has the gift of speaking all languages and does not use her abilities with godly giving, she just makes a lot of noise.
2. "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge;" If a lady can explain the Scripture, understanding all the mysteries and has all knowledge, she is still nothing without charity.
3. "and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." Even if a lady has enough faith to remove mountains? without charity, she is still nothing.
4. "And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." If a lady gives everything she has to the poor and even becomes a martyr, there is no profit in it unless it is done with charity.

B. A Christian lady knows the strength of charity. Charity will never fail when everything else will. The following is a biblical declaration of the strength of charity. I Corinthians 13:4-8

1. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind;" - is long enduring and has acts benevolently.
2. "charity envieth not;" - does not covet with warm feeling against.
3. "charity vaunteth not itself," - does not brag or voice a boast.
4. "is not puffed up," - does not inflate or blow itself up.
5. "Doth not behave itself unseemly," - does not act ugly.
6. "seeketh not her own," - does not plot her own way.
7. "is not easily provoked," - is not easy to make angry or be irritated or annoyed.
8. "thinketh no evil;" - does not take inventory of worthlessness.
9. "Rejoiceth not in iniquity," - does not act cheerful about moral wrongfulness.

10. "but rejoiceth in the truth;" - it does congratulate the truth.
11. "Beareth all things," - provides a deck for all things.
12. "believeth all things," - has faith in all things.
13. "hopeth all things," - expects all things.
14. "endureth all things." - stays under all conditions.
15. "Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away."

C. A Christian lady knows that charity is the perfect bonding agent. The world and even Christians try to establish relationships with others in ways that are not permanent or godly. Charity is also the perfect bonding agent with Christ. He gives with the charity of God and a Christian is to give back to Christ with perfect charity. I Corinthians 13:9-12

1. "For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." When charity (which is perfect) becomes the primary motivator in a lady's life, then her life and ministry bond with others who practice charity.
2. "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things." Children do not understand charity. Young Christians are like children; they have not yet put away taking to become givers. When a lady grows, it will be evidenced by her godly giving.

3. "For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." When charity is the bonding agent between two Christians, they know each other because they are the same. It is charity that causes a lady to bond with Christ and to know Him.

D. A Christian lady knows that charity is greater than faith or hope. I Corinthians 13:13 "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." The three greatest motivators of a person's actions is faith, hope, and charity. Charity is greater than the other two making it the number one motivator in life. There is nothing more important in a lady's life than developing charity.

- III. A Christian lady should have charity with all her earthly belongings. Charity (godly giving) includes material things from money to time.
- A. If a Christian lady gives as an act of debt it is not charity but an obligation. Romans 13:8-10 "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." Loving (the same as charity in these verses) fulfills every expectation God has placed on Christians. How does a lady know what actions God wants her to have toward others. **The way to know if any action toward another is appropriate is whether or not the motive is charity.**
- B. A Christian lady knows that the love of money, or what it can buy, destroys Christians because it destroys charity. When a Christian becomes controlled by earthly possessions, charity will depart. Possessions are for ministry, not collections. Many go after bigger houses, newer cars, bigger bank accounts, or any number of things that will impress others. The only thing a Christian lady has that will permanently impress others is charity. Charity and the love of money are opposites. I Timothy 6:10 "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows." Luke 6:38 "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Many times Christians restrict God because they do not choose to give. If a Christian lady does not develop charity or godly giving, she is condemning herself to always experience financial difficulties.
- C. A Christian lady understands that giving to those who will return the deed done is not charity. Giving expecting restitution destroys charity. Luke 14:12-14 "Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a

supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." It is God that gives to His children, and then only if they are good stewards of the things He gives them.

IV. **A Christian lady must have charity to be recognized as a Christian.**

Throughout the last two thousand years true Christians have been recognized by their charity. The best way to recognize false Christian leaders in any form is to watch their charity, or lack of charity. There are many so-called Christian leaders who only serve God as long as they are paid, and if they give, it is done in such a way that they receive from it.

- A. A Christian lady knows that charity is the primary way a Christian leader shows others how to live the Christian life. I Timothy 4:12 "Let no man despise thy youth; but **be thou an example of the believers**, in word, in conversation, **in charity**, in spirit, in faith, in purity."
- B. A Christian lady knows that charity is something every Christian should seek, have, and follow when dealing with others. II Timothy 2:22 "Flee also youthful lusts: but **follow** righteousness, faith, **charity**, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart."
- C. A Christian lady understands that charity has to be outward or it is not charity. Christians can have love in their hearts and not show it to others, but charity always has an action. II Timothy 3:10 "But **thou hast fully known my** doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, **charity**, patience,"
- D. A Christian lady is able to live the Christian life because of charity, even when others around her sin. I Peter 4:8 "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for **charity shall cover the multitude of sins.**"
- E. A Christian lady knows that if she is going to have a good report from others it will be because of her charity. I Thessalonians 3:6 "But now when

Timotheus came from you unto us, and **brought us good tidings of your faith and charity**, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, desiring greatly to see us, as we also to see you:"

- F. A Christian lady places great importance on being recognized as a person of charity. The church at Thessalonica was praised because their charity abounded between each other. II Thessalonians 1:3 "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and *the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth;*"
- G. A Christian lady knows that charity keeps a Christian from offending other Christians. Romans 14:15 "But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." A Christian knows that nothing is unclean in itself, but if a weaker brother thinks it is wrong, then charity will cause a Christian lady to abstain. Another good practice to remember is to never have fun at someone else's expense. Charity causes a Christian lady to do everything possible to keep from offending another.

CONCLUSION

There is no substitute for giving and nothing else but charity will accomplish the work of God. Today's society encourages and teaches women to become self-centered and do what is best for themselves. Schools teach children to become selfish. Businesses use terms like "get all you can and can all you get" and what's in it for me? The government pushes people to put all their money in retirement funds while taking over forty percent in taxes. True charity goes against the world system and is the hardest Christian virtue to achieve. People, even Christians, give contributions only because it's tax deductible for them. Charity will be ridiculed by those who don't have it, exploited by those who don't understand it, and hated by the greedy. Only one thing that can stop charity and that is choosing the world's way over God's way. Every Christian lady must have charity because charity makes her Christian in character.

HOMEWORK

Memorize I Timothy 1:5

"Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:"

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

WIDOW OF SAREPTA

Luke 4:25-26, I Kings 17:9-24

There was a great drought in Israel and people were starving. Elijah, the man of God, was in need for food and God sent him to a starving widow. She had only enough food and oil for one last meal for her and her son and Elijah asked her for it. She gave it to Elijah and this act of charity opened the door for God to give abundantly to her. She lived through the famine with God supplying her need. Even when her son died God restored his life. The story concludes with the widow saying "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth."

- A. When Elijah was in need of food and nourishment, God sent him to a starving widow who had nothing. Elijah asked the starving widow to sustain him even though she had nothing with which to nourish him.

Question: God told this lady to sustain Elijah when she had no means of nourishment. How would you respond to God if He commanded you to give away the last meal you had to sustain the man of God?

- B. When Elijah talked with this lady and asked her for food, she told him that she only had enough food and oil for one last meal for her and her son and then they would die. Elijah told her not to fear but to make him a cake to eat first and then she would have food for her and her son.

Question: Elijah told her to not fear but to trust in God by giving him the first of her last food. He promised her that she would not run out of food if she did. How would you respond if you were asked to give the first of your last? Is giving more important to you than life itself and, if so, why?

- C. The widow's son died and she questioned why God had sent Elijah to her house. She felt that the presence of the man of God was to expose her sins and bring punishment.

Question: When things in life go wrong and appear to be God's punishment or rejection, even when you have done right in following God's instructions, how do you feel? How do you respond and why do you believe you react the way you do?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

POOR WIDOW

Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4

A poor widow sacrificially put in the offering all she had--including her living money. Jesus stated that she had put in more than all the others. The dollar amount she put in was not the issue, but her attitude in offering all she had made her giving very important to God. The others gave an offering out of their abundance which is what is left over after their cost of living.

- A. The poor widow only put two mites in the offering and Jesus said she put in all she had. She offered all her possessions as a gift to the Lord for the work of His ministry.

Question: What is your attitude about your possessions and do you use them for the work of the Lord? How can you better use your possessions for the work of the ministry?

- B. The poor widow was a giving person who put giving to God above her own life.

Question: are you a giving person or do you expend everything you earn to maintain this earthly life? What do you need to do to change your way of giving?

- C. The poor widow was recognized by God. God knew what this poor widow did was important enough for Him to put it in His Bible as an example to us.

Question: The only thing God recognized the poor widow for was her giving. How does God recognize you ? How do your friends and family recognize you? Explain what you need to change and how you are going to accomplish these changes.

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION TWO - HOME LIFE

LESSON TEN

HOSPITALITY— A SHARED LIFE

INTRODUCTION

Hospitality is being lost in our society and Christianity is following because the same hardships face everyone. Homes are not open to visitors as they have been in the past. Several factors contribute to the failure of hospitality.

* Many women work outside the home and, consequently, do not think they have time to prepare food or maintain the expected quality of cleanliness.

* Many women are more concerned about their house being perfect than being good entertainers or caregivers.

* Many women shy away from inviting others into their homes because there is a lot of judgment regarding material possessions and cleanliness. (where is the measuring stick)?

* Many women are so busy with the numerous activities of life they don't make time to have people in their homes.

* Many women's lives are controlled by pride that brings destruction upon the work of God. They are more concerned about what others think than what God says.

Many Christian ladies do not realize that hospitality is a Christian attribute God instructed them to have. Many Christian ladies have determined that eventually they will have others in their homes but only after they have gained suitable circumstances. The problem is that the circumstances control them instead of God's instruction. If hospitality is not implemented when they are young, it probably will not be there when they are old. God and His ministry loses when the doors of Christian homes are closed to other Christians. Fellowship fails and loneliness becomes a daily part of life. Loneliness and depression have the same basic symptoms, but loneliness is not diagnosed by doctors. In

1997 statistics showed that over fifty percent of adults in the United States had taken some kind of prescription drug for depression, with over eighty percent of these adults being women. There is a great lack of social interchange today, accentuated by a lack of hospitality. Loneliness has produced a significant increase in prescriptions for depression medications. This is an attempt to help those who are suffering from loneliness to overcome their symptoms.

Many Christian women see hospitality as a personal option instead of a guideline from God. There are thousands of reasons or excuses not to be hospitable, but none that will stand up against the Word of God. The Word of God establishes hospitality as one of the greatest godly characteristics of a Christian lady.

A. Hospitality is listed in the description of a complete church. Romans 12:9-18, "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; *Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.* Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."

B. Paul instructed the church at Rome to show hospitality to Phebe, a Christian sister from Cenchrea, because she had shown hospitality. Romans 16:1-2, "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That *ye receive her* in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for *she hath been a succourer of many*, and of myself also." The word receive used in this verse means to admit or show hospitality and the word succourer refers to one who maintains another's life or one who runs to the relief of another.

C. Hospitality is a part of charity and should be carried out without resentment. I Peter 4:8-10, "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. *Use hospitality one to another without grudging.* As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good

stewards of the manifold grace of God."

D. There are times when the person to whom hospitality is shown may be someone God has sent to deliver a message from Him. Hebrews 13:2, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." The word angels comes from the Greek word *aggelos* which means a messenger or one who brings tidings, and generally implies a pastor.

E. The Bible gives a caution regarding to whom hospitality should be shown. Everyone who claims to be a Christian is not included in the instruction to have hospitality. II John 10, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, *receive him not into your house*, neither bid him God speed:" God limits a Christian's hospitality to those who have the same doctrine (instruction). The term "like faith" is used in most churches to describe those of the same doctrine.

I. **A Christian lady must know what hospitality is.**

Hospitality comes from the same word Greek word as hospital. A hospital is a place where people go to be taken care of. The Greek word *philoxenos* (*which* is translated hospitality) means fond of guests. The root word of *philoxenos* is *phileo*, *which* means to be a friend or fond of an individual. *Phileo* will never succeed without hospitality. Webster's dictionary defines hospitable as "given to generous and cordial reception of guests."

A. Hospitality is receiving someone for the glory of God. Romans 15:7, "Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God." When a Christian lady receives someone into her home, the reason should not be to glorify (illuminate) self. Hospitality fails because the Christian lady take hospitality personally rather than seeing it as a ministry. Many times she is concerned more about personal rejection than whether or not a person rejects her Lord. Hospitality should be for the glory of the Lord. A good guideline to follow is *whether or not Jesus would show hospitality under the same circumstances*. Would He ask the person into His home or not? Would He feed the person or not? Would He provide help and relaxation or not?

B. Hospitality is receiving a little child in the name of Christ. Matthew 18:5-6, "And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better

for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." The way a Christian lady receives Christ into her home is by receiving one of His little children. The Bible says that it is better to have a stone tied around a person's neck and be thrown into the sea than to fail to show hospitality and offend one of the Lord's little children. The word child used in these verses makes literal reference to young people from infant to a half grown boy or girl. The same word is also used to describe an immature Christian and, certainly, would have a similar application.

- C. Hospitality is associated with being faithful to the Lord. Acts 16:15, "And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us." Lydia had her heart opened by the Lord and immediately showed hospitality to the person who was the messenger from God. She knew that her qualification to have a messenger of God in her home was her faithfulness to the Lord.
- D. Hospitality is not just providing food and service, but also having the right heart. Luke 10:38-42, "Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." Martha was doing everything a good hostess should do except spending time with her guest. *She was more concerned with having everything perfect than she was about spending time with Jesus.* Jesus did not say to neglect the service part of hospitality, but add spending time with the guest. A Christian lady should plan in advance, or get assistance in serving, to allow her time to be a good hostess (a woman who receives or

entertains guests socially). Paul told the church at Rome to provide assistance to Phebe when she arrived in Rome. She was known for her hospitality and God provided her with assistance. Romans 16:2, "That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you; for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also."

- E. Martha, Mary, and Lazarus showed hospitality by caring for their guest. John 12:1-3, "Then Jesus six days before the passover came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, which had been dead, whom he raised from the dead. There they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment." Mary was personal with Jesus and not just mechanical. Hospitality is caring for a guest, not just feeding him.

II. **A Christian lady should understand that hospitality is giving.** Hospitality is not exchanging a meal or an outing with another person or family, but it is an act of giving. A Christian lady should never have her actions controlled by what she expects from her guests. This does not mean that she cannot accept an invitation to a person's home that she has entertained, but that she should never assume the hospitality she gave will be returned. She should never allow negative feelings to enter her heart or mind if the person entertained never reciprocates her actions.

- A. A Christian lady knows that hospitality happens one way. Luke 14:12-14, "Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." When a Christian lady invites someone to her home she should never expect compensation for her

act. Many times you hear statements like "what have they done for me," or "they didn't even say thank you." Hospitality is not based on what the other person does or does not do, but is based on Christ and His instructions. If the people invited into a Christian lady's home do not do what is right, or do not even show gratitude, she should still do what is right and follow God's instructions.

- B. A Christian lady knows real blessings come from giving, not receiving. Acts 20:35, "I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive." Christian giving (charity) is one way and expects nothing in return
- C. A Christian lady knows that *God will give to her* if she is a giver. Luke 6:38, "Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again." Some women look to other men and women for compensation instead of trusting God and the promise of His Word.

III. **A Christian lady must recognize the dangers of selfishness regarding hospitality.** A selfish woman is one whose actions are controlled from concern about her own welfare or advantage and will disregard others needs. Selfishness is a motive that comes from a person's heart and indicates being private or separate. Selfishness is assuming the ownership of one's own life and isolating it from others, and many times even from God. When a Christian lady shows hospitality, she considers the people she is entertaining and gives of her life to provide for them. Selfish women entertain in order to get or gain instead of give.

- A. Hospitality with selfishness produces a woman that God said true Christians are to turn away from. II Timothy 3:1-5, "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be *lovers of their own selves*, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent,

fierce, *despisers of those that are good*, Traitors, heady, highminded, *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: *from such turn away*." God warned that in the last days so-called Christians would be lovers of their own selves, seekers of their own pleasures, and despisers of those that are good.

- B. Hospitality with selfishness causes a woman to judge others by her personal standards. Romans 14:1-3 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him." A selfish woman gets into contention with others who do not have the exact same earthly practices and tries to change others through judgment. She then rejects and will not receive them.
- C. Hospitality with selfishness makes a woman unworthy. An unworthy woman is one who is undeserving or unsuitable. Matthew 10:11-14 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire *who in it is worthy*; and there abide till ye go thence. And when ye come into an house, salute it. And *if the house be worthy*, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you. And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." The apostles were told not to enter into a house if the people inside were not worthy. If the person would not receive them or hear their words, they were unworthy.
- D. Hospitality with selfishness makes a woman more concerned about what others think than what God thinks. Luke 7:36-47, "And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat. And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when

the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner. And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on. There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." The Pharisee Simon invited Jesus into his house and showed Him hospitality, but with selfishness. In his heart he condemned Jesus and the sinful woman who broke the box of alabaster over His feet, washed them with her tears and dried them with her hair. Simon was more concerned about who he was, his position, and what he had than whether or not God was loved and glorified.

- IV. **A Christian lady must be a keeper of her house in order to provide hospitality.** The housework should be shared, but the wife will be identified with its appearance (good or bad) no matter who does the work. Many times a woman will spend more time trying to justify why the house is not clean than it would have taken to clean it. She blames the children, her husband, the weather, any of her personal needs, the finances, the house itself, and numerous other excuses for the house not being in order to use for hospitality. A Christian lady needs to accept the responsibility of caring for her house and try to please Christ by maintaining a

suitable atmosphere for ministry.

A. A Christian lady is to guide her house. I Timothy 5:14, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." Guide the house is a phrase that means to direct the affairs of the building in which her family lives. God gave this responsibility to the woman of the house! When a house is filthy and unkempt, the enemy of Christianity will criticize and mock Christ by making accusations against those who profess His name. There needs to be a balance and a way to discern whether a house is just lived in and "used" or is it "unfit for use". *A good guideline to follow **is determined considering if Jesus would be disturbed by the conditions of the house if He were a guest.** He understands the schedule a person has followed and knows the difference between filthy and lived in; He knows the difference between busy and lazy. Use God's standards as a guideline, not other peoples' standards.*

B. A Christian lady is not to fail taking care of her house because of being idle. Ecclesiastes 10:18, "By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through." Droppeth through is the same as weep or drip. Today we would say that it was in sad condition. Idleness is to be negligent in the responsibilities a person has been assigned by doing nothing. Idleness is to be inactive and implies being lazy or useless. I Timothy 5:13, "And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not." The young widows were not to be taken care of by the church because they would become idle by not having anything to do.

V. **A Christian lady must deals with her time restrictions.** There are only 24 hours in a day and she must redeem her time.

A. A Christian lady realizes that there is a time for everything. Ecclesiastes 3:1-8, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to

pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away; A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace...3:17, I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work. It is not an issue of how much time a Christian lady has; everyone has the same amount of time each day. *The issue is whether or not she is properly delegating the right time to the right event.* One of the greatest frustrations of life is a result of improper management of time.

- B. A Christian lady realizes she must redeem her time. Time is a commodity too precious to waste. Ephesians 5:16, "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil." Colossians 4:5, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time." To redeem something is to rescue it from loss, to buy it up, or to ransom it. Christ redeemed us from the penalty of sin. Galatians 3:13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:" Galatians 4:5, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." A Christian lady needs to commit herself to rescue or ransom loss of her time by using it for her Lord.

A Christian lady realizes she should not live her life in the flesh controlled by the lusts of mankind. I Peter 4:1-2, "Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin; That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God." A Christian lady's life is to be lived for Christ and not controlled by the earthly, carnal, temporary life.

A Christian lady knows how to act properly with her family when guiding them in

preparing the home for hospitality. Psalms 141:3, "Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips." Proverbs 16:23-24, "The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth, and addeth learning to his lips. Pleasant words are as an honeycomb, sweet to the soul, and health to the bones." What a lady speaks affects others around her. It is very easy to respond carnally when feeling pressured to finish the housework or "improvement projects" while preparing the home for hospitality. The heart attitude and reactions of the Christian lady will teach the children in the home more about hospitality than anything else will. What will they learn about hospitality if her reactions are hateful, hostile, or quarrelsome? Preparing a home to minister and to be hospitable also means *doing* this with a proper heart attitude. *Hospitality should begin at home with the family members.*

VI. A Christian lady will receive the rewards of being hospitable and having a heart of hospitality. God has made it clear that hospitality can be one of the greatest sources for reward from Him. The reward given by the Lord for the hospitality shown by a Christian lady is based on **what she did with the things God placed in her care.**

- A. A Christian lady recognizes that when she shows hospitality to a servant of God, she will receive the same reward as the servant. Matthew 10:40-41, "He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward." When a Christian lady takes care of one of God's servants, she will definitely receive a reward. When hospitality fails, God's ministers will suffer loss because they are not cared for and, in many cases, God's ministry will fail.
- B. A Christian lady recognizes that when she is hospitable she is a helper of the truth. III John 8, "We therefore ought to receive such, that we might be fellowhelpers to the truth." When a Christian lady shows hospitality towards one of God's servants she not only helps the servant, but also helps getting the truth out to the world.

- C. A Christian lady recognizes that hospitality should be done with joy. Luke 19:5-6, "And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for to day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully." A Christian lady is to have the right heart attitude about hospitality and participates because her heart wants to. When it is something she really wants to do she will enjoy it.
- D. A Christian lady recognizes that even Rahab the harlot was rewarded for hospitality. Hebrews 11:31, "By faith the harlot Rahab perished not with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace."
- E. A Christian lady should not be afraid to use the things God has give her to provide hospitality to other Christians. Matthew 25:25-27, "And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed: Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury." The slothful servant hid the talent God placed in his care because he was **afraid**. God has given each of His servants talents to use for the advancement of His ministries. Every Christian lady has been given talents to use for Him. Her home is an asset given to her by God and should be used for His benefit. Hospitality is God's way of having those assets opened to other Christians in need, whether they are physical, emotional, or spiritual.

CONCLUSION

There are many things a Christian lady should have in her life to be pleasing to God and hospitality should be near the top of the list. There is a great failure in hospitality, which has been a major hindrance to the ministry of God. Ministers of God are dropping out because no one takes care of them, Christians in the churches are becoming

discouraged and dropping out, and even families are separating because of the failure in hospitality. Christian ladies must accept the fact that lack of hospitality causes a great deterioration in Christian life and ministry.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Ecclesiastes 3:17

"I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for there is a time there for every purpose and for every work."

Old Testament Example:

Rahab

Old Testament Example: Rahab Old

Testament Example: Rahab

Read Hebrews 11:31, James 2:25, Joshua 2:1-24, 6:22-23

Rahab was a citizen of Jericho (a gentile) and also a harlot. She was a lost sinner but believed in God and sacrificed all she had in order to take care of the men of God. God recognized her acts of hospitality to His servants by listing her in the "hall of fame" found in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

- A. Rahab was a woman known for the selling of her body for income. She was known by all to be a sinner, yet she ended up in God's hall of fame because she recognized God and the men of God and gave them hospitality. Earthly speaking she had nothing to gain but punishment and death.

Question: Do you open your home to the servants of God? If placed in a position of choosing between the advancement of the work of the Lord and your personal life what do you think you would do and why?

- B. Rahab was recognized in the book of James because she had works and not just words.

Question: If God was to describe your life today would He recognize your works? How have you shown hospitality in such a way that God has

recorded it? What are you going to do in the future?

_____.

- C. Rahab took action because she believed that God was THE God. She chose to forsake her earthly gods and trust in the God of Heaven.

Question: Whom do you recognize as THE God? How does this affect your actions? What have you forsaken by choosing God?

New Testament Example:

Lydia

New Testament Example: Lydia New

Testament Example: Lydia

Acts 16:14-15

Lydia was a businesswoman who came to Christ through the preaching of Paul. Immediately following her conversion she invited Paul and the others to stay at her home. Her first act of ministry as a Christian was to be hospitable to the servants of the Lord. She told Paul to judge and see if she was found faithful, and if she was, he was welcomed at her home.

- A. Lydia was a businesswoman but still took time for God by opening her home to Paul and his party to stay at her house.

Question: In this busy world do you find time to take care of the servants of God? When was the last time you invited one of God's servants into your home? What are your plans for the future?

-
- B. Lydia attended or applied herself to the things Paul preached. The word attended means to be given to.

Question: How do you respond to the Word of God? How are you responding to this lesson? How will you follow what God said?

- C. It is evident that Lydia had authority to make choices for herself as well as her household.

Question: A Christian lady has the responsibility of directing the affairs of her home. Do you find excuses not to make your home what God instructed? What are you doing to guide the hospitality of your home? What are your plans for guiding it in the future?

Questions for next meeting

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Godly Ladies

DIVISION THREE - CHRISTIAN LIFE

LESSON ELEVEN

CHRISTIAN LADIES IN A CHURCH

INTRODUCTION

When the New Testament is studied (especially the Pauline Epistles) a great paradox is found regarding women in the church. Paul very strongly makes his point that women are not to be treated as second-rate members, BUT at the same time, prohibits them from holding official positions of authority over men. Compare the passage of Galatians 3:28 with I Timothy 2:11-12. Galatians 3:28, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. I Timothy 2:11-12, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence."

There were many ladies mentioned in the Bible recognized for the work they performed in their churches. The following is a list of some of those Christian ladies.

A. Tabitha was recognized as a disciple (follower of Jesus Christ) and was known for her good works and acts of charity toward the poor. Acts 9:36, "Now there was at Joppa *a certain disciple named Tabitha*, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was *full of good works and almsdeeds* which she did."

B. Philip's four daughters assisted him in telling others about the things of God. The Bible says they prophesied which means to speak under inspiration. This does not mean they were used to write the Bible, but were used to tell others the truth of God's Word. Acts 21:8-9, "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had *four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.*"

C. Lydia was known as a worshipper of God and after receiving Christ, she immediately constrained Paul to abide in her house. Acts 16:14-15, "And a certain woman named *Lydia*, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, *she besought us, saying*, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, *come into my house, and abide there*. And she constrained us." A personal note: you don't have to wait ten years to start serving God!

D. Priscilla is mentioned along with her husband five times in Paul's writings and each time she is mentioned she is referred to with honor for her work in the ministry. Acts 18:26, "And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and *Priscilla* had heard, *they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly*."

E. Euodias and Syntyche were two women who labored with Paul in the Gospel and were recognized as fellow laborers. Philippians 4:1-3, "Therefore, my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. I beseech *Euodias*, and beseech *Syntyche*, that they be of the same mind in the Lord. And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, *help those women which laboured with me in the gospel*, with Clement also, and with other *my fellowlabourers*, whose names are in the book of life."

F. Phebe was a woman that Paul recommended for her work in churches other than her home church. He told the church at Rome to receive her because she was a succorer of many. (succor - is to run to the aid of another or to run to give relief.) Romans 16:1-2, "I commend unto you *Phebe our sister*, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for *she hath been a succourer of many*, and of myself also."

It is evident that ladies played a major part in the spread of the gospel in the early churches. They were of great importance to the work and God saw fit to recognize them and use them as examples of how to be Christian ladies. This lesson is to help Christian ladies understand their importance as well as their limitations in a church and its ministries.

I. **Christian ladies are to be a part of a local church body.** Every church is made up of many members or parts that are joined together by God to form a complete functioning unit (or body) enabling it to do the work of the Lord. Christian ladies are needed in every church body just as much as the men are or the church will be incomplete and weak.

A. A Christian lady understands that the Bible does not divide the saved into male and female categories. God did not divide His bodies in two by placing the men in one part and the women in another. He places them together with the men in His body to make it a complete functioning unit. Galatians 3:26-29, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, *there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.* And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. God does distinguish each part of a church as being different, but *together they form a complete living body.*"

B. A Christian lady follows God's instructions, regarding everyone of His children, by being in a body of believers. God Himself places women in the body He chooses to better equip each church body for the work of His ministries. I Corinthians 12:12-14, 18, "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many...But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." When God places members in a body He is not looking at whether they are Jew or Gentile, bond or free, male or female. He is looking at the work of that body and what is needed to get His ministry done. God puts ladies in a church (just like He does men) and assigns them responsibilities necessary to accomplish the work of the Lord.

C. A Christian lady understands and accepts the limitations of not holding positions of authority in the church body and she does not exclude herself from the functions of the body. There are certain things God restricted women from doing or being in a church. These restrictions do not exclude a Christian lady from the important works or

the rewards of doing the work of the ministry.

1. In I Corinthians chapter fourteen, Christian ladies are restricted to speak out in a church service. They are strictly prohibited to openly challenge the authority of the prophet (preacher) who is speaking, the same as men are prohibited. God does not allow wrong action by using the excuse that women are different from men and not subject to the same rules. The men were already restricted in verses 26-32. I Corinthians 14:33-35, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." The word obedience used in this verse makes it plain that the women in a church are to be subject to the leaders the same as the men.

If women do not have the correct internal control, then law has to be used to control them, the same as men. I Timothy 1:5-10, "Now *the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart*, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned: From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling; Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm. But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; *Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient*, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;" Christian ladies' actions are controlled from their hearts and have no need for law.

2. A Christian lady is never to place herself over the authority of the pastors in her church by force (usurp) or any other reason. She is not to hold any position over men, including the position of teacher (this does not include male children). I Timothy 2:9-12, "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. *But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority*

over the man, but to be in silence." Again men were dealt with in the pervious verses and women were told to act *in like manner*. Women in a church were told to show the following characteristics.

a. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and adorn themselves in modest apparel. Modest apparel is proper and orderly apparel and is the same word that is translated "of good behaviour" in another place. Like the men, the women are to wear clothes that show a pattern of good behavior.

b. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and adorn themselves with shamefacedness and sobriety. Like the men, the women are to show reverence to God by having a sound mind and controlled from the inside.

c. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and not be adorned with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array. Like the men, the women are not to have their worthiness determined by their outside decorations such as braided hair or expensive dress (including jewelry).

d. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and be adorned with good works (which becometh women professing godliness). Like the men, the women are to be seen by their good works.

e. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and learn in silence with all subjection. Like the men, the women are to be silent in church and subject to those in authority.

f. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and they are not to teach nor usurp authority over the man. Like the men, the women are not to take authority that does not belong to them.

h. They are to be *like Timothy and the men* and they are to be in silence. Like the men, the women are to be quiet when someone in authority is speaking. The next verses explains that Eve (the woman) was created as a help meet to Adam (the man) and failed because she removed herself from the authority of Adam and was deceived. Any time a person (male or female), steps out from under the authority God has placed over, them they become subject to the deceptions of the devil.

3. A Christian lady should never have a position in her church that will negate her submission to her husband. Colossians 3:15-18, "And let the peace of God rule

in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.*” God never wants a Christian lady to be placed in a circumstance which causes her to fail in her submission to her husband.

II. Christian ladies should seek to have the same abilities and works as the “positional” elders in her church. She has a responsibility to assume her part of God's ministry and do the work God has asked her to accomplish. *A Christian lady is recognized for her works just like the male leaders. In order for a Christian lady to be a leader, she must first qualify herself by her works and then take ownership of the responsibilities placed on her by God (just like the men).* I Timothy 3:10-11, “And let these also *first be approved*; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. *Even so, must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.*”

A. A Christian lady should resolve to accomplish (by the time she is sixty) the things God listed for a Christian lady “indeed” (without question, truly, undeniably). A widow “indeed” must have met eight requirements before she was qualified for assistance from her church. I Timothy 5:9-10, “Let not a widow be taken into the number under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man. Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work.”

1. She had to be at least threescore years old - She had to be over 60 years old.
2. She had to have been the wife of one man, - She could not have been in polygamous marriages.
3. She had to be well reported of for good works, - Others give testimony of her good works.
4. She had to have brought up children, - Was responsible in raising her children.

5. She had to have lodged strangers, - Was hospitable to foreigners.
 6. She had to have washed the saints feet, - Provided cleansing for the consecrated Christians physical bodies. (It was a common practice when people traveled by foot to provide a place with water for them to wash their feet. A good hostess was one who made sure her guest had clean feet.)
 7. She had to have relieved the afflicted, - Was of use or advantage to help those who were worn and in distress, suffering, or sorrow.
 8. She had to have diligently followed every good work. - earnestly accompanied all of God's good work.
- B. A Christian lady must have a life that is pleasing to God in order to be a godly minister to the younger ladies. Titus 2:3 "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;"
1. She is to have behaviour as becometh holiness - Conducting or managing her actions in reverence to God.
 2. She is not to be a false accuser - Does not degrade or expose to shame or blame by means of falsehood and misrepresentation.
 3. She is not to be given to much wine - Is not enslaved to alcoholic drink.
 4. She is to be a teacher of good things - An instructor of the right.
- C. A Christian lady who is a minister mentors the younger ladies in her church by teaching them to have a life consistent with God's Word. Titus 2:4-5, "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." A Christian lady should teach the following things to the younger ladies in her church to prevent the Word of God from being blasphemed (to speak with lack of reverence or proper respect).
1. Teach the young women to be sober, - In control of, discipline or correct to make sound of mind, feelings, and aware of factual knowledge.

2. Teach the young women to love their husbands, - Feminine affection (feeling of tender attachment) for an individual male. Love properly God's way.
 3. Teach the young women to love their children, - Fondness (cherished with great affection) for one's children. Love properly God's way.
 4. Teach the young women to be discreet, - To be in control of the things they say by controlling their minds and feelings, and walking circumspectly (careful to consider all circumstances and possible consequences) in personal matters.
 5. Teach the young women to be chaste, - Be clean (free from moral corruption), innocent (free from guilt or sin), modest (freedom from conceit or vanity), and perfect (free from fault or defect).
 6. Teach the young women to be keepers at home, - The staying (capacity for endurance) force (moral or mental strength) in her home.
 7. Teach the young women to be good, - A person that is praiseworthy because her character is conformed to the high moral order of life.
 8. Teach the young women to be obedient to their own husbands, - To arrange in an orderly manner, being subordinate (to place one's self under authority or control of another) to her husband.
- D. A Christian lady in a church is united with the other ministers to make the work of the Lord grow. Colossians 2:19, "And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and *knit together*, increaseth with the increase of God." Every member (both male and female) of a church is knit together working with God's aid and supply to cause God to increase.
- E. A Christian lady will be judged by God according to her works the same as the men. I Peter 1:17, "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear:" God is not a respecter of persons or genders. God does not judge a person according to his position, but his works. A woman

can earn every reward a man can earn.

III. Christian ladies should be committed to their local churches. There are a lot of ministries today that are called Christian. For the most part they drain churches of their workers and money by promoting visions of grandeur, claiming that their ministry is going to change the world. They are quick to point out what is wrong with churches while drawing the life out of them. God has never sent a substitute for His plan and program. God still works through His local New Testament churches. It is not wrong for a Christian lady to participate in other ministries, but never at the expense of her own church. There is just so much time in a day and unless there is a strong commitment to her church, a substitution of time and resources takes place rather than an addition. *A Christian lady should never hinder the church God has placed her in by giving to other churches or organization what God wants her to give to her church.*

- A. A Christian lady should have a home (church) that is pure for the development of her spiritual family. I Timothy 5:1-3, "Rebuke not an elder, but intreat him as a father; and the younger men as brethren; *The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.* Honour widows that are widows indeed." The older women are to be treated as mothers and the younger women are to be treated as sisters with all purity or cleanliness. Christian ladies need a place of purity in which they can develop their spiritual lives.
- B. A Christian lady is called to a local church. Colossians 3:15, "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also *ye are called in one body;* and be ye thankful." God wants to rule in the hearts of all Christian ladies and calls them to a church (with its specific preaching and leadership) to accomplish this.
- C. A Christian lady should be dedicated to the body she is a part of and participate in the functioning of that body. Ephesians 4:16, "From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that *which every joint supplieth,* according to the effectual working in *the measure of every part,*

maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Fitly joined together means to render close-jointed together. A church is a single body built by a close joining together of every part with love. A church is not a whole bunch of members thrown together in a pile, but a planned body knit together by the Master to function as a single unit.

- D. A Christian lady should be a part of a functioning unit dedicated to accomplishing the works of the Lord. Ephesians 5:29-30, "For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: *For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*" A church is the earthly body of Jesus Christ. These verses say that a person never hates his own flesh and God does not hate His body. When a Christian lady has a close relationship with her church, she understands the functioning of God. There are many sick bodies which are unable to do the work of the Lord, but praise God there are some that are healthy and accomplish what God put them on the earth for. Ministry is not just individualized, but ministry is a group of members joined together as a body of Christ to do the work of God.
- E. A Christian lady should not function as a single unit but part of body that works together for healthy productivity. I Corinthians 12:24-27, "For our comely parts have no need: but *God hath tempered the body together,* having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked. That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now *ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*" It is God that blends the members of a church together to make it a harmonious whole body. God does not intend for individual Christians to function independently, but jointly as church member.
- IV. A Christian lady who is single should serve God more than the married lady.
- A. A single Christian lady has more time to give to ministry than a married lady. I Corinthians 7:32-34, "But I would have you without carefulness. He that is

unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord: But he that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. There is difference also between a wife and a virgin. *The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit: but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband.*" A Christian lady that is not married has more time and strength to dedicate to the work of the Lord. A married Christian lady has a scriptural responsibility to take care of her husband and family, limiting the time she can give to ministry.

- B. Single Christian ladies have more freedom to tell others about Christ. Acts 21:8-9, "And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had *four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy.*"

CONCLUSION

The Bible restricts women from holding offices in a church and many resent this saying that God is unfair. They judge God by earthly standards and forget that if He was fair (by their standards) everyone should go to Hell. God, in His wisdom, designed a system of order and harmony in homes and churches. He did not intend that Christian ladies step down from their designated responsibilities to hold head offices of responsibility. Along with the deterioration of homes and families, the world tries to convince women they are "good enough" to be in "first place" in churches. Being in "first place" is never the issue in God's eyes, but each person fulfilling their part in the body *as He placed them* is the issue. A good example of this is that the ears of a body should not quit because they are not the eyes. I Corinthian 12:16, "And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" **God's work is accomplished by a body which has every part healthy and functioning, without resenting the other parts.** Worldliness causes jealousy, covetousness, rivalry, and judges people by their positions instead of their works and accomplishments. There is

a great need for Christian ladies in the churches, participating in ministries, encouraging other parts of the body, and reveling in the accomplishments of the body of Christ as a whole.

HOMEWORK

Memorize Colossians 3:15

"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

DEBORAH

Read Judges 4:4-5:31

Deborah, the wife of Lapidoth, was one of the judges of Israel and a prophet. She lead the army of Israel into battle and defeated her enemy. God gave Deborah great knowledge and wisdom and after the battle lead Israel in peace for forty years.

A. Deborah had special insight and the people of Israel came to her for judgment.

Question, Do you have insight to answer those who come to you with the truth of the Word of God? Where do you get your insight? What are your plans for the future in gaining more insight?

B. Deborah gave credit to the Lord for the victories He performed when the people willing offered themselves.

Question, When you have victories in your life who do you give credit to? How do you protect your heart from giving credit to man or yourself for the works of God

C. Deborah's heart went out to the governors of Israel because they willingly offered themselves among the people.

Question, Does your heart go out to those who willingly offer their lives to the Lord and do His work? Do you spend your time thanking God for the works of your church or do you spend your time criticizing those who do the work? What can you do to make your heart go out to the ministers of the Lord?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

PHEBE

Read Romans 16:1-16

There is not a lot known about Phebe but God recognized her because of her works. She was recognized as a servant in the local church at Cenchrea. She aided Paul and others in the work of the ministry.

A. There are at least seven women mentioned by name in Romans sixteen of which Phebe is mentioned first and given the identification of being a sister and a servant of the church at Cenchrea. The word servant (*diakonia*) used in this passage is the feminine form of the same word translated deacon (*diakoneo*) in other places in the New Testament. It carries the same duties as a deacon but not the office.

Question: Do you see yourself as a servant of such importance that you are compared to a deacon and if so why? If you are not what are your future plans to reach this objective?

B. The church at Rome was given the instructions to receive her in the Lord as saints should. She was clearly recognized as being importance because of the work she had done in the church at Cenchrea.

Question: Examine your current state of ministry and character and define how you think God, your pastor, and others see your importance?

C. The church at Rome was told to assist her in whatsoever business she needed

their help with. The word business used in this verse means "a serious activity requiring time and effort".

Question: When God assigns you an activity to do in His ministry, do you perform that task in such a way that others in the church will assist you and why do you think they want to assist you?

D. Phebe was known as a succourer of many, Paul included. (succor - is to run to the aid of another or to run to give relief.) It is evident by the testimony of her in the Bible that she was recognized as one who went out of her way to give aid or relief to other Christians.

Question: Are you a servant who seeks to take aid or relief to others (succor)? If the answer is yes then explain what makes you this way and if the answer is no explain what you are going to do to achieve this new goal.

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION THREE - CHRISTIAN LIFE

LESSON TWELVE

LADIES IN MINISTRY

(INVOLVEMENT IN PEOPLES' LIVES)

INTRODUCTION

There is a great deficiency in the Lord's ministries today primarily because the time and energy of Christians has been diverted to worldly activities. There has been a great departure from spiritual matters being directed toward the temporal or trying to change the temporal to eternal. People spend more time trying to save the atmosphere than trying to save souls. The people of the world have departed from God and even oppose Him, wanting only to possess the world and gain the control of it. The more Christians direct their lives to saving the world the less time they spent seeking to reach mankind for God. This does not mean that Christians should neglect the world, because God make the Christians the stewards of it. It does mean that the children of God should put God and his work first. The task of reaching the lost is just as much a responsibility of Christian women as it is Christian men. It is imperative that Christian ladies be active and involved in the works of the Lord Jesus Christ.

There are some Christian organizations that exclude women all together and others that exalt women to the exclusion of men. The Bible does not list any ministries for women separate from the involvement of all Christians within churches. Women have always been an integral part of churches and do not have special spiritual needs or abilities that men do not have. When exclusive women's ministries are established they have to center on the physical or earthly because spiritually women are the same as men. Galatians 3:27-28 "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, *there is neither male nor female*: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." This discipleship series is not designed to establish a special women's

ministry, but help Christian ladies to be better equipped for involvement in all the works of the Lord.

God wants women involved in the ministry and there is a great need for strong Christian ladies to work with the men to accomplish the goals God has set for His churches. God instructed New Testament Christians to take the gospel of Jesus to the whole world and that instruction is to all the saved. If churches today do not have strong, godly, Christian ladies who assume their part of this great commission then the churches are going to fail. Every Christian lady is called to this ministry just as much as the Christian men are.

I. A Christian lady starts ministering by personally and individually deciding to become involved. The decision to minister (wait on others, be an attendant, a teacher, or care giver) belongs to each Christian lady and is between her and the Lord.

- A. A Christian lady should get involved in ministry because of her salvation. The women at Thessalonica made the decision to become ministers. Acts 17:2-4, "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And *some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas*; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and *of the chief women not a few.*" The word consorted means to provide or fill up by being together. Many of the leading women in Thessalonica believed in Jesus Christ and immediately became involved by going with Paul and Silas and provided for their needs. Immediately following their salvation they made the decision and got involved in ministry.
- B. A Christian lady should choose to teach others the Word of God. There are several women recorded in the Bible because they taught others the Bible and God recorded their teachings in His Scripture.
 1. Mary the mother of Jesus had her teaching recorded in the Bible. Luke 1:46-55, "And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the

low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever."

2. Anna a prophetess taught others and God recorded it in the Bible. Luke 2:36-38, "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem."
3. Priscilla helped her husband teach Apollos the way of God more perfectly. Acts 18:24-26 "And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesians. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

- C. A Christian lady should minister by praying. Many times Christians pray without anyone knowing and many times prayer is hard work. When a Christian lady is praying for someone else she is ministering.
1. The women were with the apostles praying and asking God to supply

their need on the night the Holy Ghost came to earth. Acts 1:13-14 "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, *with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus*, and with his brethren."

2. The women were given instructions regarding their state of being when they prayed. I Corinthians 11:5 "But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncovered dishonoureth her head: for that is even all one as if she were shaven." Women are not to share things about their husbands personal life when praying.

II. A Christian lady is recognized by her involvement in ministry. There are many ways to recognize people, by their looks, their jobs, their homes, their cars, and many more. God recognizes a person by their works or ministry.

- A. A Christian lady should be adorned with good works (ministry). I Timothy 2:9-10 "In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works." The word adorn means to decorate and God wants Christian ladies to be decorated with good works." The world today places all their adorning on the physical body and its dress. Christians should look at other Christians according to their works, not how much money, social status, or good physical looks they have.
- B. A Christian lady should be a minister in her church. A Christian lady named Phebe was recognized by God for being a servant of her church at Cenchrea. Romans 16:1-2, "I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also." The church at Rome

was instructed to receive her because of her ministry. She was recognized by her works, not money, or any other worldly quality.

- C. A Christian lady who is married should participate in ministry with her husband whenever possible. Priscilla was a Christian lady who ministered with her husband, Aquila, and was recognized by all the churches of the Gentiles. Priscilla was mentioned several times with her husband because of the work they did.
1. Romans 16:3-5, "Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: *Who have for my life laid down their own necks*: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ."
 2. I Corinthians 16:19, "The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with *the church that is in their house*." One of the reasons Priscilla was known was because they opened their home as a place for their church to meet.
 3. Acts 18:2-3, "And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) *and came unto them*. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers." When Priscilla and Aquila had to depart from Rome they continued ministering.
- D. A Christian lady should minister because of what Jesus has done for her. Jesus healed Peter's mother-in-law and she ministered to Christ and the apostles. Matthew 8:14-15, "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever. And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and *she arose, and ministered unto them*."
- E. A Christian lady should follow Jesus where ever He takes her in ministry. There were several ladies who traveled with Jesus to minister to Him and even after His death sought to minister to His body.

1. Mark 15:40-41 "There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome; (Who also, when he was in Galilee, *followed him, and ministered unto him;*) and many other women which came up with him unto Jerusalem."
2. Mark 16:1, "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, *that they might come and anoint him.*"

III. A Christian lady should be involved in discipleship and counseling (teaching) other ladies. Discipleship is the process used in causing someone to become a follower of Christ. The young women do not know how to be godly or how to be a lady. Someone must teach them.

- A. A Christian lady should teach others to follow the Word of God. Titus 2:3-5, "The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed." There is a great failure today of the experienced ladies not teaching the younger women to become ladies. The Bible instructs the aged women to teach the younger, this is not an option, but a command. Our society today places nearly all its emphases on individuality while God places the emphasis on relationships. People seek to satisfy themselves and focus on their rights rather than on how they can best serve others.
- B. A Christian lady should teach the younger ladies to prevent the Word of God from being blasphemed (to speak with lack of reverence or proper respect).
 1. It is through discipleship that the young learn not to be irreverent to the Word of God. Titus 2:4-5 "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be

discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, *that the word of God be not blasphemed.*" Unlearned Christians blaspheme the Word of God because they do not know any better.

2. Those who are disciples have put off the old man with his disrespect for God. Colossians 3:5-10, "Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience: In the which ye also walked some time, when ye lived in them. *But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him:*"

The unlearned and undisciplined or not disciplined do not show proper respect to God or His word and must be directed by those who have learned. Discipleship must take place for God's name and His Word to be shown proper respect.

IV. A Christian lady is to be involved in evangelizing others. A Christian lady will come in contact with thousands of people in her lifetime, many of which are lost. Every Christian lady should share her Christ with others because she may be the only way they will ever hear the gospel.

- A. A Christian lady should labor to share the gospel with others. There were Christian ladies that labored with Paul in presenting the gospel. Philippians 4:3, "And I intreat thee also, true yokefellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life." The gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15:3-4)
- B. A Christian lady will be great in God's eyes if she becomes a minister of His

word. Mark 10:43, "But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister:" God recognizes his children by their ministry to others, including evangelism. A Christian lady must care about others and their destination. She not only must care but take action to minister the Word of God to them.

- C. A Christian lady has the light of the Lord to show forth His glory. Ephesians 5:8-13 "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." The only way the lost will see Christ is when someone is His light.
- D. A Christian lady has the ability to bring the blind to see. The lost are blinded by the God of this world and only someone who has the ability to bring the light of the image of God can heal the blind and give them sight. II Corinthians 4:3-4 "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

V. A Christian lady should support the ministry by giving of her income. God established that ministry was to be supported by the giving of His people. Ministry is dependent upon God, Christian's prayers, and their giving.

- A. A Christian lady is a giver of her income for the furtherance of the ministry. Christians are to give according to how God has prospered them. This makes it clear that a percentage of a Christian's income is what Paul told them to give. I Corinthians 16:1-2 "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."

- B. A Christian lady wants the ministry of Christ to succeed to the extent that she gives as liberally as possible. The churches of Macedonia gave liberally even above what they were able because they wanted to participate in the ministering to the saints. II Corinthians 8:1-5 "Moreover, brethren, we do you to wit of the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia; How that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality. For to their power, I bear record, yea, and beyond their power they were willing of themselves; Praying us with much intreaty that we would receive the gift, and take upon us the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. And this they did, not as we hoped, but first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God."
- C. A Christian lady has a heart that wants to give and choose for herself what she is going to give. Giving is a heart decision and should be done with the right attitude. II Corinthians 9:7 "Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver."
- D. A Christian lady is recognized by God for her support of the ministry by her giving. The church at Philippi was recognized and praised by God because they wanted His ministry to succeed enough that they gave. Philippians 4:14-19 "Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

CONCLUSION

God instructed Christian ladies to get involved in ministry. A Christian lady is concerned that the work of the Lord be accomplished and knows that she plays a major part in its success. She is not selfish and worried about whether mankind thinks she is important but whether or not she is doing what God instructed her to do with her life. Christian ladies throughout the Bible were involved in helping, ministering, and working in the Lord's work and are still involved today. Young Christian women need someone to help them become the ladies God intended them to be and minister the things of God. If the Christian ladies of the church do not get involved in ministry, the church is doom to fail.

HOMEWORK

Memorize I Timothy 2:9-10

"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works."

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

Naomi

Read Ruth 1:1-4:22

Naomi was a Jewish woman married with two sons. Because of a famine in the land they moved to Moab and both her sons ended up marrying gentile wives. After a period of time her husband and both her sons died. Naomi was left with her daughters in laws Orpah and Ruth and advised both of them to return to their families. Orpah returned but Ruth said that she would go where Naomi went and that Naomi's God would be her God. Naomi advised Ruth regarding Boaz which she eventually married and became the grandmother of David.

- A. Naomi influenced Ruth to the extent that Ruth said she would make Naomi's

God her God.

Question, does your life show forth the character of Christ to the extent that those who know you best want your God? What do you need to do to change your character to be more like Christ?

B. Naomi sought rest (a settled spot) for Ruth that she might have a good life.

Question, do you seek to help others with their lives by seeking a place of rest for them that they might have a good life? Describe your place of rest and your good life.

C. Naomi advised Ruth to sit still and wait for Boaz would do. Naomi ended up being the nurse for a grandson.

Question, do you wait on the Lord or do you rush ahead of God and end up missing God's plan for your life? What do you plan to do to develop patience so that you can wait on the Lord?

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:

Mary & Martha

Read Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-12:11

Mary and Martha were sisters and their brother was Lazarus that Jesus raised from the dead. Mary and Martha entertained Jesus in their house and worshiped Him as the Lord.

Read Luke 10:38-42; John 11:1-12:11

- A. The Bible says that Jesus love Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. The love that Jesus had for them was a social love meaning that He loved spending time with them. Jesus returned to Judaea to be with them at the risk of being stoned.

Question: Does Jesus want to spend time with you? Is your life dedicated to the work of the Lord to the extent that Jesus would be glad to physically be present with you?

- B. Martha stated that she knew that what Jesus asked of God He would receive. Jesus was the mediator between God and man and Martha knew that God would answer Jesus' prayers.

Question: Do you believe that Jesus is still given the things He asks for from His Father? Do you know that Jesus is still the mediator and that God still gives Him what He asks for? Name something that you have asked Jesus to ask His Father for and have received it.

- C. Martha served Jesus while Mary anointed His feet with ointment and dried them with her hair. Both women gave to Jesus with their abilities, recognizing Him as THE LORD.

Question: Are you serving Jesus with the abilities He has given you? Do you compare your abilities with other's and devalue what God has given you? What are you doing to serve Jesus with the abilities and things you have?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION FOUR - COMMUNITY LIFE

LESSON THIRTEEN

THE WORKING LADY

INTRODUCTION

God made it very clear in the Bible that everyone who is able should work, including women. God went so far as to say that if people did not work their church was not to feed them. II Thessalonians 3:10 "For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that *if any would not work*, neither should he eat." Living a life of freedom went out in the garden when Adam and Eve sinned. Every person who has lived and will live on the earth suffer the consequences of the curse placed upon the earth. When God cursed the earth he caused it to be covered with thorns and thistles and said that in sorrow would mankind eat of it. The curse did not just cover Adam and Eve but ever descendent of theirs who lives on the earth. Genesis 3:17-18 "And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: *cursed is the ground for thy sake*; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;" God made it clear that every person has to work to have the things they need in this life. God cursed the ground for Adam's sake but Eve had to suffer the same hardships brought on by the curse. In Genesis 2:24 God had already declared that a man and his wife were to be one flesh and consequently what one suffers the other experiences. Before the curse God intended that Adam was to work and take care of the Garden of Eden. Genesis 2:15 "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it." Having to work was not the curse but the curse caused great difficulties for mankind as they control the production of the earth.

Christians should work for more than just self existence but to be a testimony to

others as they provide assistance to those in need. I Thessalonians 4:11-12, "And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." Even if a Christian lived off of others before he was saved, he should work after he is saved. Not only to supply his need but to be **able** to **give** to others. Ephesians 4:28, "Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." Giving is a crucial part of Christianity but when there is no income giving is lost. It is not enough to just work for what is needed but also to give.

I. A Christian lady has to determine if it is biblical for ladies to work outside the home. There are some today who teach it is against the Bible or ungodly for a woman to work outside the home. Nowhere in the Bible does it forbid or even imply that it is wrong for a woman to work outside the home. The saying "A woman's place is in the home" should be "A woman's **responsibility is to her home.**" The Bible does make it clear that it is the woman's responsibility to make sure her home is cared for.

A. A Christian lady is responsible for equipping her family to function in a way that pleases God. Titus 2:4-5, "That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, **keepers at home**, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed."

1. Material things in order. The phrase "keepers at home" was a common term used in past days. It meant that the woman was responsible for keeping the home functioning. To do this a wife had to grind grain for bread, spin wool or cotton for fabric, make the garment, go to the river to wash clothes, raise the vegetables, can and preserve food, and many other responsibilities that consumed numerous hours of hard work. Today most of these tasks are done outside the home but all for a price. Most Christian ladies have to

chose between working at a wage providing job, which enables her to purchase the needed items of life, or doing all these chores herself.

2. Behavior in order. The words "keepers at home" is not the same as keepers of the house. The little word "at" is a function word that indicate presence or occurrence in, on, or near. The word "keepers" means one who watches over or guards and the word home means family, not house. This short phrase clearly means that the young Christian lady should learn to guard her family. Remember that the term "help meet," making reference to why God created Eve, means protector. I Corinthians 7:14 "*For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy.*" To have a sanctified family is one that has reverent respect or honor. The Bible makes it clear that the Christian lady is given the responsibility of guarding her family by maintaining a godly atmosphere.
 3. Stewardship in order. Luke 16:10-12 "He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. 11 If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? 12 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own?" A Christian lady should realize that everything in her house belongs to God and God will reward her according to how she cares for those things.
- B. A Christian lady recognizes that there ladies in the Bible that worked and God honored them for their work. Tabitha (Dorcus) made coats and garments for others and was recognized for her work which contributed greatly to her being resurrected from the dead. Acts 9:39, "Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them." Tabitha had a reputation for being full of good works and consequently others cared about

her.

II. A Christian lady who works will experience conflicts between home and work. There are some Christian ladies who neglect their homes responsibilities using the excuse that they work. If the Christian ladies from the eighteen hundreds heard the excuses some use today regarding the lack of time and being tired because of a job as justifications for not doing what God instructed in the home, how would they respond? Working and taking care of a home is a lot of work, but it always has been. It is easy to look at those who do not have to work and forget that God said that to who much is given, much is required. The issue is each Christian lady doing with their life what God wants.

- A. A Christian lady's husband trusts his working wife. Proverbs 31:10-11, "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil."
1. The virtuous woman worked and the heart of her husband safely trusted in her. God wants a Christian lady to be one her husband feels trust in knowing that when they are apart she will remain faithful, discreet, display integrity, and care for his interests.
 2. The virtuous woman provided the things her family need so that her husband did not have to go to battle to get spoil. (what was captured at the end of a battle and many times was part of the mainstay for families.) The virtuous woman was able and willing to supply additional income for the family which assisted the husband in taking care of the essentials. He did not have to spend more time to gain income over and above his regular job. He trusted her to assist him in this area of their life with working her own job.
- B. A Christian lady does good to her husband even though she works. Proverbs 31:12 "She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life." A Christian lady who has her husband's best interest at heart does everything she can to strengthen and encourage him. She does not speak evil of him or defame his character. She does not fluctuate her love and devotion to him when

circumstances in life change. She delights in her husband's comfort, success, reputation, and joy. She does not choose wrong and justify it by using her husband's faults or problems. She is one that never puts herself first above God or her husband. James 4:10, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up."

- C. A Christian lady takes care of her family even though she works. Proverbs 31:13-15, "She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens." When a lady works she must understand that working outside the home does not give her the right to neglect her "home work". There are some who say that it is demeaning to a woman to refer to her as a homemaker. To be a successful homemaker a lady must be an economist, an administrator, a business manager, a purchasing agent, and a work foreman while she is fulfilling her responsibilities as a wife to her husband and a mother to her to her children. She is THE one who makes her home what it should be; she is THE Homemaker. Every successful working Christian lady is a superwoman--not a simple servant.
- D. A Christian lady is one who works to build. Proverbs 14:1, "Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands." The Bible makes it clear that a wise woman builds her home and family. Building her house or home includes the physical building in which she lives as well as strengthening those who live within that building.

III. A Christian lady who works may experience conflict of submission.

Submission is placing oneself under another person's authority by one's own choice. This is a great concern when women are placed under the authority of men other than their husbands. Christian ladies encounter a precarious situation regarding being in submission to her employers. Titus 2:5 "To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, **obedient to their own husbands**, that the word of God be not blasphemed." There are many occupational problems that arise when women have

to work with men who are not their husbands. The best hours of a woman's day are usually given to co-workers on her job. It is during work hours that she is the prettiest, wittiest, kindest, and most active. When she returns home tired, (physically and emotionally spent) she often loses her wit, kindness, and even her looks. She then wonders why her life at work becomes more meaningful and fulfilling than the time with her family. She has to be nice at work or she will get fired; she can't get fired at home, or can she? Divorce has reached proportions where over half of the marriages in the United States are ending in divorce. Situations arising from women working outside the home have contributed greatly to this problem. Many times a man will see a different woman at the work place than the one a husband sees at home. A man may like what he sees in a co-worker more than what he sees in his wife at the end of the day. However, he may not realize that his wife is just like the women he works with and the women in the work place are just like his wife. Almost everyone puts in a full day's work and needs rest in the evening hours.

The following are some wise pointers to help a Christian lady (working outside the home) keep her distance from "professional intimacy" which makes her susceptible to extramarital affairs.

1. Do not expose intimate life to anyone at work. Avoid any and all intimate conversations with male friends.
2. Establish accountability to husband, friends, church, and pastor regarding conduct at work. Know that others care and will be hurt if sin wins.
3. Learn to say "no" on ethical or moral issues, even if it means losing the job.
4. Do not fantasize about intimate activities with others. They only look better at work.
5. Avoid frequent or prolonged time alone with male co-workers.
6. Avoid any time alone with males outside the work place and work time (this also includes lunchtime).
7. Realize that no one is immune to an affair, stay on guard.

- IV. A Christian lady should have good work ethics.** The word ethic when used regarding work habits means conforming to accepted professional standards of conduct. Work ethics may vary from one company to another so a Christian lady should get her work ethics from the Word of God. Some Christian ladies have been destroyed by employers or co-workers that convince them to go against what God has taught. Every Christian lady should keep her allegiance to Christ no matter what the cost.
- A. A Christian lady is a conscientious worker. The word conscientious means to be governed by or conforming to the dictates of the conscious. Romans 2:15 "Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and *their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;*" A Christian lady's conscious or awareness of rights and wrongs is on the inside in her soul and when violated produces guilt and hurt. If a Christian lady violates of her own soul, even if instructed to do so by her employer, she will destroy her joy because she has rejected the workings of the Holy Spirit of God.
- B. A Christian lady keeps her virtue at work. To have virtue is to conform to a standard or right, morality. Proverbs 31:10 "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." The word virtuous used in this verse means excellent, or moral strength. A virtuous woman is one who has a strong standard of right with strong moral excellence. A virtuous lady is one that never has the strength to not violate her morality. If virtue cause her to lose her job then praise God because she made Him more important than earthly gain.
- V. A Christian lady should have correct priorities in her life.** Priorities means a person places things in the correct order of importance, rank, or position. A Christian lady must know her priorities or the world will take over her life by using one of the low priorities and consuming all her time and energy. Sometimes her job gets moved into a position of priority that destroys her life. If something is a priority

then it can not be dropped. There is a time and place to do everything God planned for a person's life. What is the proper order of priorities a Christian lady should have?

- A. A Christian lady puts her Lord first. She gives the Lord Jesus Christ first place in her life. Mark 12:30 "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: *this is the first commandment.*"
- B. A Christian lady knows that she must control her own life. She establishes her own identity with ethics and morals that represents Jesus to others. Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and *the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.*"
- C. A Christian lady knows the importance of her husband. She is the help meet to the husband God gave her. Ephesians 5:22-24 "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore *as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.*"
- D. A Christian lady places knows the importance of raising her children. She practices proper stewardship of the children God placed in her care. II Corinthians 12:14 "Behold, the third time I am ready to come to you; and I will not be burdensome to you: for I seek not yours but you: for *the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.*"
- E. A Christian lady gives time to ministry. She is involved in her church and the ministries in which God has placed her helping with the work of the Lord. II Corinthians 6:3-10 "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But *in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; by pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, by the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of*

righteousness on the right hand and on the left, by honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things."

- F. A Christian lady works to help her family accomplish the things of God. She is willing to help her husband by working to provide income for the earthly necessities of their home and give to God's ministries. Acts 18:2-3 "And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; ...and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for *by their occupation they were tentmakers.*" Priscilla was a tentmaker with her husband and they were prosperous enough to be of assistance to Paul.
- G. A Christian lady knows to spend time with others. She is willing to be a social influence with others, including friends and family members. I John 1:7 "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, *we have fellowship one with another*, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."
- H. Her personal life - She takes time for personal activities which develops and refreshes her as a person. I Peter 3:10-12 "For *he that will love life*, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

VI. A Christian lady represents more than her just her own life. To represent means to bring clearly before the mind. What a person represents is what others see when they look at their life. It is possible to represent several things at the same time. A Christian lady always represent her individual life but at the same time she represents others.

- A. A Christian lady represents the Lord. Matthew 5:16, "Let your light so shine before men, *that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father*

which is in heaven." II Thessalonians 1:10, "When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and *to be admired in all them that believe* (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day." A Christian lady has the responsibility of showing Christ to others and particularly those she works with.

- B. A Christian lady represents her husband. When a man and woman marry they become one and no matter where one of them is the other is being represented. Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and *they two shall be one flesh.*"
- C. A Christian lady represents her church. Paul when writing to the church at Corinth rejoiced that the testimony of Jesus was confirmed in the church. I Corinthians 1:4-6, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; *Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:*" Every member of a church is part of that church and everything each member does shows others the church. What a Christian lady does shows others what her church is like. She is showing others her church everywhere she goes and especially in the work place.

CONCLUSION

When religious leaders state that women should not work outside the home, they cannot prove it from the Scripture. There were many women in the Bible who worked "secular" jobs and with God's blessings. In this age there are numerous mechanical conveniences which allow women more time to be active in working activities. A woman does not have to work a "pay" job, but at the same time she should never feel guilty if she does. Christian ladies who work outside the home need to be careful how they conduct themselves and avoid the numerous pitfalls that can destroy her. She needs to be fully committed to the Lord, her husband, and her church. She also needs to make sure that she never represents herself independently of her husband and her Lord. The quickest way to destruction is when a wife starts functioning independently from the authorities God has established in her life. Alone she will fail. Remember Adam and Eve!

HOMEWORK
OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:
VIRTUOUS WOMAN

Proverbs 31:10-31

The virtuous woman in Proverbs is the example of an ideal or perfect lady. The Bible lists many things in this passage regarding her qualities, with the most outstanding being the admiration it gives her for her work. The Virtuous woman was definitely the most excellent and efficient woman worker of the Bible. The word virtue means "a force of men or other resources." The virtuous woman had the necessary resources within her to get the job done.

- A. In Verses 13-19 the virtuous woman is doing business and is a leader in the world's markets.

Question: Do you seek to excel in the world's business so God may be glorified by your work ethics? Name one principle you have used in business that helped make you a good worker and a good witness?

- B. The virtuous woman is clothed with strength and honor as stated in verse 25. She has internal strength that shows on the outside by her works.

Question: What is your internal strength that produces works which are honorable? Explain why it works.

C. The virtuous woman speaks words of wisdom and speaks it with kindness as stated in verse 26. The whole book of Proverbs deals with having wisdom and ends by showing the Virtuous woman having this wisdom.

Question: Wisdom is to have "deep understanding, keen discernment, and a capacity for sound judgment." Rate your wisdom. What are you doing to increase your ability to have the right understanding, discernment, and judgment?_____

**NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE:
TABITHA**

Acts 9:36-43

Tabitha, also known as Dorcas, was a servant in the church at Joppa and is best remembered for being raised from the dead by Peter. When she died the widows stood by her weeping, showing the coats and garments she had made. The widows along with the disciples recognized her for the good works she did and compassionate mercy she showed toward the poor.

- A. Tabitha used her physical abilities and talents to meet the physical needs of others.

Question: Do you use your physical abilities to help others?

- B. Tabitha's works were acknowledged by God and recorded in the Bible so that every Christian would know of her good works.

Question: God is keeping a record of your works in Heaven. What do you think He is going to say?

C. Tabitha's deeds were deemed of such importance that God extended her life.

Question: Do you think God recognizes your good works enough to reward you in this life? If so what do you think His reward will be?

QUESTIONS FOR NEXT MEETING

1.

2.

3.

4.

Building Christian Ladies

DIVISION FOUR - COMMUNITY LIFE

LESSON FOURTEEN

INVOLVEMENT IN COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

INTRODUCTION

There are many organizations in the earthly community that want a Christian lady's time, energy, and resources. Many of these organizations are good for the world and worthy of some time investment. It is very important that each Christian lady knows how much she can get involved and what effects these organizations will have on her. Every earthly organization produces only earthly results. This does not make them wrong, but it makes them only temporal. A Christian lady should never invest so much time in temporal things that she neglects permanent or eternal things. Every organization wants Christians to get involved in their organizations, even at the sacrifice of the works of God. Each Christian lady will have to decide what is the most important to her. There are certain things God instructs, and even warns, regarding involvement with the world. This study is to help a Christian lady understand both the need and the dangers of getting involved with the world.

I. A Christian lady is different from those in her earthly community and cannot completely identify with them.

There are some things in an earthly community a Christian lady can identify with such as housing, transportation, work, and education. There are some things a Christian lady has that the world can never identify with such as godly faith, godly charity, eternal hope, godly ethics, and godly work motivation. The Bible explains

several reasons why a Christian lady will never completely identify with her earthly community.

- A. A Christian lady is not of the world. John 17:14-18 "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world." The Bible says in Titus 2:14 that God will purify unto Himself a peculiar (beyond the usual) people. Even if a saved person tries to conform to the world, she can never be like it. A Christian lady should realize her identity IS different from her earthly community. She should accept being different, she should enjoy being different, and she should live differently than the world lives.
- B. A Christian lady does not have the same spirit as the world. I Corinthians 2:12 "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." When a person gets saved they receive a new spirit which is born of God from Christ's spirit. God does not give the spirit of the world, but one that is different and has a different purpose. The spirit of the world does not understand the new spirit that comes from God. The earthly community does not have this new spirit and, therefore, cannot understand it. The earthly community only identifies what they can see, and to them God's spirit world is fictitious.
- C. A Christian lady is no longer controlled by the spirit which leads the lost to disobedience. Ephesians 2:2,11-14, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens

from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

The spirit of the world works in the earthly community and produces disobedience to God. A Christian lady has been drawn near to God by the blood of Christ; therefore, the world cannot identify with her.

- D. A Christian lady is to keep herself unspotted from the world. James 1:27 "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." A Christian lady cannot allow her earthly community to add its spots (blemishes) to her new life in Christ. The earthly community tries to make everyone like they are and cannot identify with anyone who does not become like them.
- E. A Christian lady is not to love the world. I John 2:15-16, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." **What a person loves is what that person will live for.** A Christian lady is not to love the world because if she does, she will live for the world and not for God. The earthly community will not identify with a Christian lady because she does not love what they love and she does not live for what they live for.
- F. A Christian lady can never be identified by the world because the world does not know Christ. I John 3:1 "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." The world publicizes a lot of things about God and Christ, but it only takes a small amount of discernment to realize that they do not know Him. They say a lot of things trying to get the saved person to identify with them because they cannot identify with God or His children.

II. A Christian lady recognizes the state of the lost in her earthly community. The lost are without God even though many attend churches and start "Christian" ministries. The lost will recognize a saved person's good humanity--but not her God. They want the things of God--but without God. They want the good Christian life--but only for a better earthly existence. The lost seek to be accepted by God's children--but usually without seeking to change. The only way to be really changed is to be born again by accepting Christ as personal savior. God will not allow the lost world to have the things of God without Christ. The Bible lists many things God does that prevents the world from understanding His ways until after they come to Christ.

- A. A Christian lady recognizes that God speaks to the lost in parables. Mark 4:11 "And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables:" A parable is a fictitious narrative of common life conveying a moral truth. The world can understand the story, but not the truth. *The world will then use these good stories to develop a "good life" but without Christ. The lost cannot understand the mysteries of God because they do not have Christ.*
- B. A Christian lady recognizes that the lost does not see or know the Spirit of truth. John 14:17 "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Those of the world will put on acts of having the Spirit and even "speak in tongues" but they do not know the Holy Spirit. No matter how much they are taught, they can only put on the acts of God with their earthly life. The Spirit of truth cannot go to the world or any of its organizations because they will not see Him.
- C. A Christian lady recognizes that the god of this world has blinded the minds of the lost. II Corinthians 4:4 "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." Some Christians spend massive amounts of time trying to get the world to understand the

things of God. It is impossible for a blind man to see unless he is given sight. *It is just as impossible for a lost man to see the truth of God without Christ.* The social gospel that adheres to the philosophy that people will go to Heaven if they live the right kind of life is false. God speaks to the lost in parables so they will come to the reality that they must be saved to understand the things of God. But the god of this world blinds, them preventing them from seeing the image of God. Without salvation the earthly community will never see God.

- D. A Christian lady recognizes that the devil has sown his evil seed among the children of God in an attempt to destroy God's kingdom. Matthew 13:24-30, 37-42 "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, an enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn....He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

God sows His good seed in the world and the devil sows his evil seed.

God said to let them grow together until harvest time when the reapers will separate the good from the evil. It is not the job of Christians to remove the evil children, but to reproduce the good children. *A Christian lady is responsible for using her life for God, and not spending her life trying to make the world acceptable to God.*

- E. A Christian lady recognizes that the wisdom of the world (which keeps the lost away from God) is made foolish by God. I Corinthians 1:20-21, 27 "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe....But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;".

God's wisdom and man's wisdom are two different things. One leads a person to Christ, the other leads a person away from God. God still uses the weak things of the world to mess up the wisdom of man. For example, the wisdom of man believes in the theory of evolution without evidence at all (that the various types of animals and plants have their origin in other preexisting types and that the distinguishable differences are due to modifications in successive generations). The world with all its wisdom has never been able to produce any act of evolution. What this worldly wisdom accomplishes is to blind the eyes of the lost from seeing God.

III. A Christian lady is to minister to her earthly community. It is crucial that a Christian lady understands the condition of the lost in her community. She also needs to realize that she has responsibilities to the community.

- A. A Christian lady has the responsibility of taking Christ into her lost community. Matthew 5:13-16 "Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men. Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men

light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." A Christian lady is part of God's salt (preservative) and light (illumination). *A Christian lady needs to go into her community to take Christ, and not conform or adapt to the community.* The Bible makes it clear that the lost will not see Christ or become saved *unless the Christian lady takes Christ to them.* She should understand that the lost in her community stumble because they do not have the light. John 11:9-10 "Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours in the day? If any man walk in the day, he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no light in him." Without God's light, the lost stumble because they have no light in them. A Christian lady must shine as the light of God in her community.

The Bible also makes it clear that the only way a person can be saved is that God calls him to salvation. Luke 5:32 "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." *God still uses human instruments to call the lost to salvation.*

- B. A Christian lady has the responsibility to be without rebuke in her crooked and perverse community to be an example of the Christian life. Philippians 2:15 "That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;" To shine as lights of God in the world a Christian lady must not be like the crooked and perverse world in which she lives, but she is to be without rebuke (blameless).
- C. A Christian lady has the responsibility of sharing that Christ did not come to the earth to condemn her community, but that they might be saved. John 3:16-19 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth

on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." A Christian lady is not to take condemnation to her community but the love of God which is Christ. The lost are condemned already and their deeds are evil and just the presence of light exposes these deeds. What they need from a Christian lady is the message of salvation.

- D. A Christian lady has the responsibility of carrying the word of reconciliation to those who is at enmity with God. II Corinthians 5:19 "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." God committed the word of reconciliation (restoration) to His children and left it up to them to carry it to the lost. A Christian lady must go into the world in order to take God's word to them.
- E. A Christian lady has the responsibility to know that those in her lost community are subject to the judgment of God. I Corinthians 5:12-13 "For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person." Those within a church are protected from the judgment of God but those without God will judge. The lost are already under the judgment of God and only by bringing them into church can they be protected.

IV. A Christian lady faces a compromising danger by attaching herself to her

earthly community through voluntary jobs. *If a Christian lady neglects her Christianity by submitting herself to the influence of a lost person, she becomes vulnerable to the ethics and morals of that person.* When working in a paid job, there

are certain rules and regulations administered by the government to protect a lady.

There is also the absence of emotional fulfillment with a paid job that is fulfilled many times with a voluntary position. A voluntary responsibility becomes very gratifying to a Christian lady's emotions and causes her to feel important and needed. This is very dangerous because it could take the place of the fulfillment needed from her husband and from God.

A Christian lady should realize that her lost community does not want her to bring the light of God upon their deeds. They want her to bring only her human life to them that they may have her participate with their human life. ***A Christian lady should never participate in anything where she cannot show forth Christ.*** John 3:20-21 "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God."

- A. A Christian lady should manifest wisdom toward the lost. Colossians 4:5 "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time." A Christian lady must be a part of her community to take the light of Christ to those in it. *She should use wisdom while representing Christ so she does not attach herself to the world.*
- B. A Christian lady should manifest a transformed mind. Romans 12:2, "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The world uses conformity (to bring into harmony or accord) when trying to control a person's actions, but God transforms people (to change in composition or structure). A Christian lady has been transformed and should manifest that she is different to those in her community. II Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
- C. A Christian lady should manifest adherence to the doctrine of Christ. II John 9-11 "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this

doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Adherence is to hold fast or stick by as if by gluing. A Christian lady is to stick to the doctrine of Christ and recognize that the way to recognize the lost is because they do not stick to the doctrine of Christ.

- D. A Christian lady should manifest that she is not a friend of the world. James 4:4 "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." A Christian lady is not to develop a friendship with the world because it will produce enmity with God (enmity: positive, active, and typically mutual hatred or ill will). There is mutual ill will between God and the world and if a Christian lady becomes a friend with the world, she is attaching herself to its enmity with God. II Peter 2:20 "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning." If a Christian lady goes back to the world after she has escaped its pollutions, she will be worse off than before. A Christian lady should manifest Christ showing that she is attached to Him, not the world.

V. A Christian lady sins if she substitutes earthly community works for heavenly ministry. It is very easy to fall into the trap of sacrificing the permanence on the altar of the temporary. It is very easy to become overly active in worldly organizations that consume a lady's time, energy, and finances. These organizations usually have good objectives, but in the end, the only effect they have on the work of God is to detract from His ministry.

- A. A Christian lady is not to substitute the Word of God for the cares and riches of this world. Mark 4:18-19 "And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful." The cares of the world can restrict the

Word of God and keep it from producing fruit. *Many churches are unfruitful because they are consumed with the cares of the world and neglect propagation of the Word of God. A Christian should never allow the Word of God to be choked by her involvement in her earthly community.*

- B. A Christian lady is not to substitute her position in Christ for the love of the world. John 15:19 "If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." God has chosen the Christian lady out of the world and given her a future out of the world with God.
- C. A Christian lady is not to substitute her faith in Christ for the philosophy and empty deceit of the world. Colossians 2:8 "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The world has its traditions, follows after its own traditions and will ruin a Christian lady through its own worldly philosophies. *A Christian lady is to be careful that she does not become defiled by believing worldly teachings.*
- D. A Christian lady is not to substitute Christ's ministry for the pleasures of this life. II Timothy 4:10 "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia." Demas is a name that is infamous for being a quitter. He wanted earthly pleasure more than the work of God and turned back to the world. *A Christian lady should always care more about the ministry of Christ than the pleasures of this world.*

V. A Christian lady should show godly actions toward her lost community.

The earthly communities provide ample opportunities for a Christian lady to fulfill her lust and produce times of tribulations. A Christian lady is to live her Christ-filled life and not respond to the world or be controlled by what the world does. *The world does not want a Christian lady to live a godly life because she makes them look and feel bad.* Even though the world tries different ways to keep a Christian lady from being what God wants her to be, she should never depart from her godly character

with its godly actions.

- A. A Christian lady should show godly actions toward the lost so she will have lack of nothing. I Thessalonians 4:12, "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing." No matter what actions the lost have, a Christian lady should never show any actions that are dishonest or sinful. When a Christian lady is honest and follows the instructions of God, she will receive compensation from the world because she is a good person.
- B. A Christian lady should show godly actions toward the lost even in times of tribulation. John 16:33 "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." The world provides plenty of tribulation but God has overcome the world giving a Christian a basis for cheer.
- C. A Christian lady should show godly actions toward the lost knowing that their wisdom is foolishness with God. I Corinthians 3:19 "For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness." The world with all its wisdom is foolishness with God because He is so far above all of mankind's wisdom.
- D. A Christian lady should show godly actions toward the lost by denying herself worldly lusts. Titus 2:12 *"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;"* A Christian lady should live a righteous life and a life that is in control at all times. She should never yield to her carnal desires and live like the world.
- E. A Christian lady should show godly actions toward the lost and never do anything to cause another person to fall. Matthew 18:7 "Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!" God warned everyone about causing another to fall and certainly a Christian lady should never have any actions, which causes another person to fall. The Bible tells every Christian to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves in Matthew 10:16.

This is the best description showing how a Christian lady is to deal with her community.

CONCLUSION

The earthly communities cannot think and function the way Christians do. Christians are to take the Word of God to the world and be lights that represent Christ. Christian ladies are not to become trapped by attachments to the world or give up any of her godly attributes to go back into the world. **She should never sacrifice any of her Christian attributes to reach the world.** Reaching the world is a ministry that every Christian should seek to be a part of, but never at the expense of giving up Christ.

HOMEWORK

OLD TESTAMENT EXAMPLE: ESTHER

Read the book of Esther

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLE: PRISCILLA

Read Acts 18:18-26; Romans 16:3-4;
I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19

