



Ladies of Grace
Bible Studies for Women
The Ministry of Womanhood Series

Every woman has been born into the ministry of God. It is spelled out for her in Scripture, lived out before others in her home, church, and community, and recorded by God in the pages of eternity.

The Disciplines of a Beautiful Homemaker

Last week we began our study on the Ministry of Making a Home. We learned about how important the home is, how to develop a healthy home, and what it really means to be a keeper at home. After it was all over, I think that the general consensus of the ladies is this ~ if they are going to become the kind of homemakers that God wants them to be, it is going to take a lot of work! And I don't know about you, but if I am going to give myself over to doing a lot of work, I want to see something beautiful come out of it.

Many years ago, God showed me a very special verse in the Bible that assured me that HE wanted to see something beautiful come out of all of my home labor as well. I would like to share this verse with you:

“And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.”
Psalm 90:17

Even though this verse was originally written by Moses to the Israelites as they were building things for God, I knew that God wanted me to claim it for MY VERY OWN as He sees me trying to build my home for Him as well. And today as I bring this study to you, I want to encourage you to claim this verse for your very own as well.

Before we begin talking about the specific disciplines of a beautiful homemaker, I want to talk a little bit about the kind of beauty that God wants each one of us to have upon us as He establishes our hands.

When the Bible says, “And let the beauty of the Lord be upon us,” in Psalm 90:17, it is talking about having ‘the majesty of God’, the ‘holiness of God’, the ‘grace of God’, and His ‘gracious influence’ to be reflected on us. What kinds of things do you see in the world that reflect the true beauty of the Lord?

- ◆ The wisdom of creation
- ◆ The loveliness of nature
- ◆ The order of the seasons
- ◆ The natural recycling of things
- ◆ The simple pattern of the daily life of plants and animals





Believe it or not, this is the kind of beauty that God wants to show Himself evident in our homes as well. So, as we talk about the disciplines of a beautiful homemaker, we will be focusing on five areas of training that will help us to develop the kind of work that it will take to produce a home that makes us feel that the beauty of the Lord is upon us, and the kind of home that will allow our family members to see the beauty of the Lord around them as well.

THE FIVE DISCIPLINES OF THE BEAUTIFUL HOMEMAKER

The Discipline of Organization. The Bible reminds us that God likes things to be organized in I Corinthians 14:40 when He says, “Let all things be done decently and in order.” The creation account in Genesis chapter one demonstrates that importance that God puts on things being done in an orderly manner. And as a matter of fact, the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy show us this as well! God is a God of order, and one of the simplest ways for us to see the beauty of God upon us in our homes is to be a homemaker that keeps an orderly home. This is something that will ONLY come through the Discipline of Organization.

What is the Discipline of Organization? *It is the training of ourselves to have self-control over our tendency to do our work at home in a chaotic manner.* What does a chaotic manner look like? It looks like this: dinners that are thrown together without a plan, houses that are only cleaned when company comes, laundry that gets washed and not folded or put away, living areas and bedrooms with stuff all laying all over the place, and workdays that are filled with unfinished tasks. If you have ever struggled with these kinds of things, you will agree with me that not only is there no beauty in it, there is no glimpse of God establishing Himself in it either.

How can this be overcome?

1. By establishing a daily/weekly schedule and routine for yourself.
2. By making sure everything in your house has a place.
3. By planning meals, chores, and things like grocery lists ahead of time.
4. By eliminating from your home the things you don't need.

The Discipline of Diligence. In Proverbs 14:1, we are told, “*Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.*” And in Proverbs 31:27, we are reminded that the virtuous wife “looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness”. God makes it very clear in the scriptures that He expects Christian women to work very hard at taking care of their homes. He is not the least bit sympathetic to those ladies who complain about not wanting to do their laundry, dishes, or household chores. And He is not the least bit moved to compassion by the woman who gripes and complains about how much work there is to be done. As far as God is concerned, if there is work for a woman at home to do, she should be working hard all of the time until it is done. Does this mean that God is unloving and unkind to women? Absolutely not! It just means that He wants us to do what we are supposed to do, so that we can have the kind of clean and fresh smelling homes that He wants us to have.

How can we develop the Discipline of Diligence? **By doing what needs to be done WHEN it needs to be done, HOW it needs to be done ~ whether you feel like doing it or not.** It is really that simple, but for some women, it is just not that easy. You know why? They allow things to distract them. What kinds of things distract a woman from getting her housework done? Things like talking on the telephone, visiting with friends, watching TV, reading books & magazines, shopping, running errands, sleeping late, working outside of the home, poor time management, and other things like this.

What will happen to our homes if we don't develop this discipline? God tells us in Ecclesiastes 10:18, “*By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.*” In other words, our houses will fall apart!

“I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.” Psalm 40:8



The Discipline of Making Wise Choices. Proverbs 24:3-4 tells us that having wisdom is an important part of homemaking when it says, “*Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*” And Proverbs 31:26 reminds us that the mouth of a good homemaker is filled with wisdom and on her tongue is the law of kindness.

What is the Discipline of Making Wise Choices? It is the training of oneself to make decisions based on God’s Word and the principles that are found therein. It is the resisting of the temptation to do what is convenient, popular, or self-satisfying. **It is looking at every situation in the home and doing what God would do.**

Let’s look at some of the situations that arise in the average Christian woman’s home, and see what God would do:

1. The kids want a TV in their room, would God allow them to have it?
2. The kids want to eat pop tarts for breakfast, macaroni & cheese for lunch, and frozen pizza for dinner, would God allow them to have it?
3. The kids want to wear expensive designer clothes so that they can look like the other kids, would God allow them to have it?
4. The kids want an expensive video game set for Christmas, would God allow them to have it?
5. The kids want to go to Disney World for a vacation, but you don’t have the money to do it, would God want you to go into debt for it?
6. The kids fail school and want to make it up in summer school, would God allow them to do it?
7. The kids don’t feel like going to church, would God allow them to stay home and miss it?
8. The kids don’t feel like dressing right when they go to school or church, would God allow them to wear what they want?
9. The kids don’t agree with what Dad has told them to do and want you to tell them to do something different, would God want you to do it?
10. The kids don’t want to eat what you have fixed for dinner, would God give them something else to eat?

It is very sobering to think about things through the eyes of what God would do, isn’t it? And yet, this is exactly what we will need to do if we want to develop the discipline of making wise choices.

The Discipline of Loveliness. This is the act of creating a home filled with beauty. One look out any window, or one stroll around any park will remind each one of us that God loves color and decoration. God wants our homes to be well-decorated. He wants them to be filled with colors that coordinate, and furnishings that are attractive. There is **everything right** about making or buying curtains for your windows, pretty comforters for your beds, having nice furniture, and having walls that are painted or wall papered. Too much emphasis is spent nowadays on spending money to escape the home, rather than investing money to beautify it. There are many families that will spend thousands of dollars on a once a year vacation, electronic equipment, and going out to eat ~ but will tell you that they don’t have the money to decorate their bedrooms or replace the ratty living room furniture. It doesn’t make a bit of sense . . . but it does reveal the fact that their heart is not turned towards establishing the beauty of God in their homes.

Loveliness is also brought into the home through the things that we make with our hands. Things like homemade quilts, cross-stitches, calligraphy prints, flowers grown in our gardens, paintings, wreaths, flower arrangements, etc. help to bring a very special kind of loveliness to any woman’s home.

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The Ministry of Womanhood Series



Maybe you don't have much money, and you genuinely CAN'T buy big things like furniture or drapes for your home. Here are some simple ways that most every woman can bring the beauty of God into her home:

- ◆ Play beautiful music daily in your home
- ◆ Light a fragrant candle in the main rooms of your house
- ◆ Set the table for dinner
- ◆ Make curtains out of bed sheets
- ◆ Decorate the walls with stencils
- ◆ Keep the TV in only one room of the house
- ◆ Keep computer games, video games, and most movies out of the house (don't ever waste your money on these, if you desperately want to enjoy them from time to time, borrow them from the library!)
- ◆ Color coordinate your rooms
- ◆ Keep clutter to a minimum
- ◆ Display family pictures in inexpensive frames (you can buy these at Home Goods & Marshalls)

Another very important, (but often overlooked) way that we bring loveliness to our homes is by being lovely ourselves! This includes dressing pretty, smelling nice, and speaking kindly. This is the kind of loveliness that our husbands love the most!

The Discipline of Prudence. What is prudence? **It is the good stewardship of things.** As homemakers, what kinds of things have we been given stewardship over?

Here is a list of a few things:

- ◆ Our husband's money
- ◆ Our children's health & well-being
- ◆ Our personal time
- ◆ Our house
- ◆ Our furnishings

The Bible tells us in Proverbs 19:14 that "*Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the Lord.*" Believe it or not, even if you are a waster by nature, God can make you into a woman that manages her time, talents, and treasures wisely. All it takes is a willingness to be controlled by limits. What are the limits in life that a prudent homemaker is limited by? Things like a budget, a schedule, right priorities, and her husband's approval. Many wives get themselves and their homes in trouble when they decide to do things without first seeing if they have enough money, seeing if there is enough time, and seeing if it is ok with her husband if she does it. I know that I have put my own home in jeopardy many a time because of this one.

As I close, I remember the time when I invited this 400 pound homeless lady and her husband to stay overnight at our house. When I met them and found out that they had nowhere to stay, I felt so sorry for them. As a matter of fact, I felt so sorry for them that I brought them straight home without even informing my husband (much less asking him about it!). Well, to make a long story short, after my husband came home and recovered from his surprise of having these strangers at his house, he found out that the man was a convicted murderer, and the woman was psychotic. I spent the night worrying myself sick over the safety of my girls, my husband spent the night praying that I had learned a good lesson on being prudent, and the couple slept like babies on my tan sleeper sofa, which collapsed under the pressure of all of their weight in the middle of the night. I don't even think they noticed. But God noticed, and it was something that He wanted me to notice too. He never wanted me to forget what happens when I react with feelings, rather than wisdom, and rashness, rather than prudence . . . my children's lives are exposed to danger, my heart gets overwhelmed with worry, and the loveliness of my home is marred by the tension created by my husband becoming irritated with me, and by the reality that our once lovely couch, has now become the incredible sinking sofa.

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8