

A Mother's Checkup

1. On a scale of one to ten (ten being the best), how are you doing at knowing God, keeping a relationship with Him, and reading and studying his Word. How might a member of your family rate you?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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2. In Deuteronomy 6 there is the command (backed up in the NT) that we impress upon our children the things of the Lord. List out three NEW ways you might be able to do this with your children/grandchildren/family.
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
3. Look at the injunctions in Titus 2 to train younger women. Look through the list and write out a few different ways to implement this command with your own daughters, or other young women in the church.

The Family Before God, Part 2 Women as Wives and Mothers

Pastor Rick McNally, February 2009
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Marriage is Good

If you were to listen to many people in history you would get the impression that marriage was not a good thing. Many writers, Christian and non Christian held a very low view of marriage.

Even today we find the feminist fringe of our culture decrying marriage, stating every marriage is an abuse of women, and debasing both men, *and* women who enter marriage, and the institution of marriage and the family itself.

Christians ought not take this view. Marriage is God's institution, the family is his building block. The family is the means by which God desires people to begin to understand him.

In Ephesians 5 we see that God reveals himself to us in an intimate way, reminding us that he is the groom and we are his bride. We see the beauty of the sacrificial love of the husband, and the beauty of the receptive wife in the picture of Christ and the church.

Where it has fallen apart is at the same point everything that is good falls apart — sin. Work was

God's design, but with sin it has become a burden. The first set of brothers ever to walk the soil of earth ended badly in a fit of jealous murder. Sex, ever a gift from God, has been muddled and cheapened by the sinfulness of base humanity.

One reason we do not understand the beauty of marriage is that we do not understand the intended relationships in marriage; we do not truly understand love, authority, submission, or respect.

The Trinity

To better understand these things we need to go to the source of all things — to God himself.

As you all know God revealed himself to us through scriptures as a triune God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Within the Godhead we see three separate, distinct personalities in one thrice holy being. Do I completely understand this — no.

We understand from scripture that they are all truly God, and that they are completely equal in power, and substance. They are

truly one.

Now, in their oneness there are roles that each takes. The Son in Scripture always defers to the Father (“not my will”; “not my words,” “not my works” etc.). Furthermore the Spirit seems to desire to give glory to the Son. There is a definite “hierarchy” if you will. There is a picture here of authority and submission.

Looking at the relationship of authority and submission found in the Godhead we see something striking; there is no cruelty, no lording over, no disrespect or inequity. There is only a sense of knowing ones role and doing ones task.

Looking at Father God, we see that he never “Lords over” the son. Looking at the Son of God we see that he respects the Father and longs to bring him glory. Each of these persons are equal in relationship to each other, yet there are different roles.

God has given us roles in marriage too, and expectations for these roles.

For the men among us we have been given the role of head of the household, and the task of love.

Now, there are two different Greek words for “head” in the NT. There is *Arche*, which means “first, boss, overlord, important one.” The other word is *Kephale*, which means “physical head” or “first into battle.” If Paul thought that men ought to be overlords in marriage he would have used the

other term, which means overlord, instead he used a term that means “first into battle” or head. Paul was not telling men to be authoritarian in their marriages, but rather in a chivalrous manner, a first line of defense and a loving leadership head, sacrificing and giving Godly direction.

Compare this with what God wants out of church leadership (always plural, always servant hearted, always good examples), or go back further to the example of authority and submission found in the Trinity itself, we begin to see a consistent picture emerge.

This picture is wholly unlike the picture the world gives us in authority — in a very good way.

²²Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. **Ephesians 5:22**

³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. **Ephesians 5:33**

Ephesians 5

The bulk of our time in our discussion of the man as husband was spent in Ephesians 5. The discussion is book ended with two commands having to do with the wife.

In Ephesians 5:22 wives are told to “submit to their husbands”

A Wives’ Checkup

1. On a scale of one to ten, how are you doing at pursuing your husband as you ought. The Hebrew word *to cleave* means to follow and pursue, not just marry. It is our responsibility to continue the pursuit of our husbands.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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2. Wives (or young women who desire to be a wife one day) write down an overall goal for being a wife and some biblical texts to show that that goal is Biblical.

3. Name four or five biblical verbs that describe ways you are to respond to your husband? Write down one way you can do each of these in the next week.

- A.
- B.
- C.
- D.

4. In 1 Peter 3 there is a push toward inner beauty. Contrast and compare inner/outer beauty and how to train yourselves to focus on inner beauty.

A Wife of Noble Character Proverbs 31

¹⁰A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. ¹¹Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. ¹²She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. ¹³She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. ¹⁴She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. ¹⁵She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. ¹⁶She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.

¹⁷She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. ¹⁸She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.

¹⁹In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. ²⁰She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. ²¹When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. ²²She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple.

²³Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. ²⁴She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. ²⁵She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the

days to come. ²⁶She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. ²⁷She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. ²⁸Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: ²⁹“Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.” ³⁰Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. ³¹Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. **Proverbs 31:10-31**

- **Is hard to find**
- **Is valuable**
- **Is respected by her husband**
- **Brings only good**
- **Provides for her family**
- **Is industrious**
- **Is generous**
- **Brings respect to her husband**
- **Speaks wisdom, instructs**
- **Is not idle**
- **Raises children who will call her blessed**
- **Fears the Lord**
- **Receives praise at the city gate**

and in Ephesians 5:33 they are told to “respect” their husband. Keeping this in context with the husband’s command to love (self sacrificially, as a steward) we can understand that both submitting and respecting, when the husband is going about self sacrificial loving, is a response that is in character with the very character of Christ.

1 Peter 3

The key passage I would like

¹Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, ²when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. ³Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. ⁴Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. ⁵For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, ⁶like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. **1 Peter 3:1-6**

to discuss is found in the third chapter of the First Epistle of Peter.

Here there is the reiteration of the “submissive” command given in Ephesians (when we consider submission please consider also Philippians chapter 2).

One specific reason given here is that of their example and testimony. The submissive attitude of a wife is a great testimony to those around her, true, but it is also a testimony to the husband. The idea in verse 1 of “do not believe the word” does not just mean belief to salvation, but also belief that leads to obedience.

The idea is that if a husband is slow to obey the word, a wives loving submission spurs him on toward further obedience to the word.

The other concept here is the contrast between outward physical beauty and inner beauty. A godly emphasis is on inner beauty because God sees it as valuable, because it is eternal, and because at its heart is a trust in God.

Titus 2

Our third passage to consider is found in Titus chapter 2. Here we are given two things to avoid so that these women can teach and train the younger women. If they are addicted to wine or slanders the younger women would never trust them to be the teachers and life examples they need to be. The curriculum is spelled out in

³Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. ⁴Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, ⁵to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the word of God. **Titus 2:3-5**

this passage clearly, and is as follows;

- To love their husbands
- To love their children
- To be self controlled and pure
- To be busy at home
- To be kind
- To be subject to their husbands

The very fact that the older women are told to train the younger women these things means that they are not just in-nate. My first reaction is, “did my wife need to be trained to love our children?” Didn’t that just come naturally? The answer is no. What does it mean to love your children? In this day and age many children are shielded from all consequence, hurt or failure by many parents, and that is not love.

We in the Body need to realize two things; first our older women need to be willing to teach and spend time with the younger women, and have time available

to do so. The younger women need to seek out help from trusted older women, and be willing to listen to their lives and words.

This needs to be intentional, we will need to open our schedules to do this, and open our hearts as well.

³³For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. As in all the congregations of the saints, ³⁴women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. ³⁵If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church.

1 Corinthians 14:33-35

1 Corinthians 14

This passage must be seen in its historical context. According to both the Apostle Paul’s Hellenistic culture, and his Jewish heritage women were looked down upon. A well known Hellenistic thanksgiving phrase was “Thank the gods I was born a man not a beast, born a man not a woman, born a Greek not barbarian.” Aristotle held a poor view of women, believing them to be “botched men.” The Talmud states that “Any iniquity (of a man) is insignificant compared to a wife’s iniquity.” A Jewish

phrase stated “Let the words of the Torah be burned up, but do not let them be delivered (taught) to a woman.”

In comparison to these cultural norms of Paul’s day we can compare that Paul believed man and woman both to be made in God’s image. We know that in Christ Paul said that we are no longer male and female, Jew or Gentile, but rather one in Christ. Paul believed that all are sinners. Paul stated “Let women learn.”

Paul’s sociological reforms were significant, and the obedience to scripture reformed all who applied its teachings over the ages.

Instead of getting into the debate of whether a woman should be ordained or not, etc., I would simply like to make the comment of simplicity here, a comment of application. Let her ask her husband at home. Wives, ask questions of your husbands; husbands, know enough to answer or find the answers.

Proverbs 31

Enough has been written about this passage in the past but I believe that women who want to be excellent wives will study this passage, and consider the ramifications of an excellent life (see the next page)

The Woman as Mother

I would like to make four simple observations.

Proverbs 31 / The “woman of noble character” will raise children who will rise up and call her blessed.” Your quest for character, your hard work in raising children (which is thankless work, difficult work, and sometimes draining work) will harvest something that you will never regret, and only later see the benefit of. Never give up in doing good.

2 Timothy 1:5 / It is obvious in the life of Timothy that it was the lives and testimonies of his grandmother and mother that made all the difference in the Godly life of this biblical character. Your raising of your children has results you might never see!

Titus 2 / Train your daughters how to do the things listed in this passage. Its as important, if not more so, than is math, soccer and spelling.

1 Thessalonians 2:7ff / Here motherhood is used as a model of discipleship. Paul states that they cared for the people, sacrificed for them, gave up, went without, and shared truth with gentleness. In his thinking he compares this with motherhood. How do we disciple others? Look to mom!