

Babies, Balance, and a Blessed Home

Beautifying the Bride, p.3

By Jeff Noblit

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Anchored in Truth Ministries

1915 Avalon Ave.
Muscle Shoals, AL 35661

Website: www.anchoredintruth.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/anchoredintruth

Well, grab your Bibles and let's go to Titus chapter 2 and ladies, this will be the last installment of my exhortations to you. Of course, as one of our elders have said, you haven't really left the men out. You've had some strong words for us. Well, I I don't want to have a strong word for anybody. I want God's word for all of us. You know, we talk about, we we sing about this God that we serve. He's holy. And I will remind you fresh, that a holy God means he's radically unlike you and you're radically unlike him. You don't even have the capacity to begin to understand him unless he offers it to you as a grace gift. So as we're looking at homes and marriages and families and as Paul writes to Titus and gives Titus instruction for the churches on the island of Crete, he bears down on the ladies and the ladies' roles. And ladies and men, if if we just started out on our own and say, okay, what's wisest and best for men and husbands and fathers and and women and wives and moms, what's best? Well, we'd wander off and we'd we'd land way over here somewhere where our world is right now with the most bizarre, perverse, idiotic conclusions about men and women, what marriage is, what even genders are. Can you imagine? Can you imagine? Insanity. But see, the God we serve is the God of holiness. He's way over here. He concludes way over here. His conclusion is really opposite of anything we would naturally come to. So church is the place where Spirit-awakened beings have been given by God at least the germ of capacity to begin to embrace and treasure and have affections for God's wisdom, not our wisdom. So if you don't have the Holy Spirit helping you, I can't impress you. Don't want to impress you. The Spirit of God has to give you the amen of the Spirit, amen, whereby when the word goes forth, we're constantly repenting, reforming, and embracing God's wisdom and holiness over what we would naturally conclude.

Titus chapter 2, I'll read the whole section and then we will bear down on the simple phrase, which is the only phrase left pertaining to the ladies that I have not yet dealt with. And I might just add this, this has been an unusual journey. It's been an unusual journey. I don't know that I've faced warfare preaching at any other time in my ministry more than preaching this. I know that I know that I know that it's right but it so goes against the trend of the day. Probably I've spent double the study per message that I would normally spend. And my dear wife has been the biggest cheerleader to say, "Jeff, you've got to do this. I need it. Our ladies need it. Our men need it. We can't let our church keep drifting with the culture." We've got at least, I'm certainly not calling for radical changes in your

lifestyles this next week, but we've got at least start thinking differently and help our younger girls think a little differently and our younger men think a little differently as we go forward. Is that fair, church? Just do a tune up on our thinking in some of these key areas. Not only is that essential that you're blessed and you have the most in the way of human flourishing, that's important to me, but more important is that we glorify God in our lives and the things we embrace, the teachings we embrace and how we strive toward our lives.

All right, Titus chapter 2, verses 3, 4, and 5. Paul's writing to Titus about getting these churches straightened out, and he bears down here on the older ladies first in verse 3, "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good." So evidently, there are a lot of Cretian women, and it gotten over in the Cretian churches, who kinda were irreverent, were malicious gossips, and hung out at the wine bars. Why else would he say those things? Not absolutely everyone, but that was probably a general description of too many of the church ladies. Interesting.

Verse 4. Well, the older ladies need to clean up their act, verse 4, "so that they may encourage," teach or school you could say, train you could say, "the young women to love their husbands, to love their children." Now, stop for a minute. How can a culture become so wicked that women have to be taught to love their husbands? Women have to be taught, school-trained, to love their babies? What kind of culture is so godless and coarse that they influence women so that they don't have a natural joy and devotion to their own babies? I tell you what kind of culture, a godless culture. That was what was happening in Crete. Certainly what's happening in our world. So you older ladies, you got to help these younger ladies get this straightened out in their thinking if they're not thinking that way. And then verse 5, continuing on, "to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husband so that the word of God will not be dishonored."

Now, the introduction is long, but there's stuff here for you, okay? So I want you to be sober and alert as we go through this this morning because you're gonna get to the judgment seat of Christ and Jesus is gonna ask you, "Did your pastor teach you older ladies how to help the younger ladies?" You're gonna say, "Yes, he did, but I didn't listen well." Don't do that. Listen well.

Paul here in this text spends right at three times the amount of space exhorting the women than he does the men. First of all, let me say that's not because the men couldn't use some exhorting about doing better in their God-ordained roles and assignments. That's not why. But I do have a couple of ideas that I'm convinced in the balance of biblical truth are true as to why he would spend three times the amount of time exhorting the ladies as the men. Number one, women are always the primary focus of the enemy. Satan will attack the church. Satan will attack the home. Satan Satan will attack the culture through the women. Eve, as 1 Timothy 2:13 points out, it was not Adam who was first deceived, but Eve fell into deception and then transgression. Well, what what's Paul's point writing to Timothy who's overseeing the Ephesian church when he says, "Understand, Timothy, that

the ladies, though they have special gifts and special superiorities to men, nevertheless, they have a vulnerability to false teaching that isn't the same as men's vulnerability to false teaching." Just as Satan went after Eve first, so Satan is still coming after the women first. That's why pastors need to work diligently to preach and teach the truth and work with the men so they can protect their wives and protect their daughters from the influence of the enemy.

2 Timothy 3:6, Paul writes to Timothy who's overseeing the Ephesian church and says watch out for the weak women. King James says, the silly women. It means they're led by their emotions only. They're not principled and godly women. I've said this many times because it's true, I have a lot of principled and godly women in this church, so I don't worry about them chasing nonsense, but that's generally not true. And there were weak, immature, spiritually immature women in Ephesus, evidently, and Paul said, "Be careful, Timothy, watch these ladies because they're weak, they're silly, they follow their emotions, and they're vulnerable to those false teachers who creep into their houses and take them captive with their false teaching." He didn't say that to the men. The men can be easily led astray, but Satan primarily focuses on women.

Just just a thought about our culture at large. If you remove the influence of, generally speaking, young women, if you remove, just pull out just pulled out of our culture, the influence of young women, abortion would not be legal, homosexual marriage would not be legal, and the transgender movement would not be prominent. That's a fact. Overwhelmingly, it's silly immature young women who get their emotions wrapped up in things and rant and rail and revile, and of all unbelievable things, so many of these middle class or upper class young white women marching in the streets talking about how oppressed they are. They've got it freaking made. They've got it made. But we live in a day where it's become vogue to be the victim. "I'm the oppressed one." Uh, my uncle was a family historian, and he points out that the Noblit brothers left France uh 17th century or so to come to America because the French Catholics were beating them and persecuting them. I don't know, maybe I could get some reparations from France. Maybe the French Catholics owe me something, amen? I'm a victim. And what's sad about that, there are people who are victims, and there are people who are literally oppressed, but we don't know who they are anymore because everybody is. Kind of like the boy that cried wolf.

I didn't know why I got on that necessarily, but women are more prone and more easily swayed. God ordained women to need the protection of godly pastors, godly husbands, and godly fathers. Lady, don't throw that office, "Well, I don't believe that." You're a fool if you don't believe that. You should humble yourself and say, "O God, I do need that. Give me the men in my life that can give me that kind of protection."

Well, first of all, because women are the primary object or target of the enemy but secondly, I think that the reason Paul spends three times as much energy here is because men were not wholesale abandoning their roles. They may have been failing at their roles that God give them as husband and fathers but they were not necessarily throwing that off and redefining what their roles were, as it seems the women were likely doing here. So

likely the women Paul is writing to through Titus were not just negligent in their position, in their duties, they were rejecting that that was even their position or their responsibilities at all. Let me give you an example from our own culture that I think parallels this very well. For example, 73% of married women today with underage children work outside the home. I've said to you many times, that's not necessarily all sin, but probably much of it is. Better get open the Bible, get with your husbands and get God's clearance clearance on some of these things. 73% today, married women, underage children work outside the home. In 1950s, that was only 21%, a 288% increase. A lot of that is because the feminist movement, the satanic feminist movement, has convinced women, your role has changed as if God's word has changed, as if God's wisdom has changed, as if we're wiser than God.

So, that's radically different, is it not? Yet men, on the other hand, today, only 5% of men say that they are stay-at-home dads. So, see, the men generally haven't changed what they believe their role and duties are. They may not be doing them very well overall, but they at least hadn't thrown off that this is still my role and duty, where women, not here in small town Alabama, not at Grace Life Church, but women in the country in general have said, "No, no, we've redefined what our job and role and duties are in life." That's what I think is the foundational issue because he's gonna tell the older ladies, and literally in the Greek, teach the younger ladies to think sanely. Stop this insane thinking because they've completely changed even their understanding and their agreement with God's original call and duties he's given them.

Now, if we said today, compared to the 1950s, 70% of the men want to stay home and don't want to go work and provide for the families, you know what we'd say, "Oh, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, time out. 70% of the men no longer see their duty as providing for their own families?" Now, that would be a radical change, would it not? But that radical of a change has happened for the women. Are y'all getting this? Y'all see what I'm saying? 71% of Americans say that for a man to be a good husband and father, he must financially support his family. That's still true today. The great majority, 71% of men, still believe to be a good husband and a good father, I have to financially provide for my family. So that really hadn't changed much in the last, well, several centuries. By contrast, what percentage of women today feel that to be a good wife and mother, their primary center of their life should be their children and their home? I guarantee you that one's changed a lot. So see, I'm talking about mindsets here, the view of what is our job under God. Of course, most of them aren't thinking about God.

Today, 60% of families use paid child care. By contrast, in the 1940s, there were only 3,000 child care facilities in the whole country only able to care for about 130,000 children. That's radically changed. So there's been radical change. And by the way, isn't it working out so well for us as a country? Suicide rates. Let me say this straightforward and right up. The great majority of wickedness and over overall juvenile delinquency goes straight back to, "I don't feel loved and cared for at home." Did you hear me? It goes straight back to, "I don't feel loved and cared for at home. My parents, one or both, love the world, the things of the world, but they could get out of the world more than they cared for me." If we could fix that problem, we could fix juvenile delinquency. Are you

hearing me, church? So, it's a high probability that the women of ancient Crete, that Paul's writing to Titus who's overseeing these churches on this island of Crete, that the majority of the women in those churches were not just negligent in their duties that God has given women, but were beginning to reject these as even being their responsibilities anymore, which we see so so rampantly in our age, and we see that spirit all over Western culture.

So reviewing the flow of where Paul's coming to when he comes to Titus chapter 2, verses 3 through 5, uh we have the older ladies he says, must get their act together. And basically in verse 3, they're to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips, not enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good. The older ladies have to stop just flitting around town, engaging in worldly and sinful behavior. The older ladies need to get back home and live things decently so that they can help the younger ladies not turn out like they turned out. That's basically what Paul is saying here. Don't you love how straightforward the word of God is? So practical. So up to date. Is it not amazing the same in principle problems of this churches of 2,000 years ago, it's the same thing we are facing today? That's because this book never gets old. It's always relevant. I get tickled about some of these churches, some of these new fancy whiz-bang churches call themselves Relevant Church. You want to be relevant, stay in this book. You don't make the church relevant, it is relevant, always has been.

So he tells these older ladies, "You need to get back home, quit flitting around town, quit drinking so much and I want you to be teaching what is good," that's the last part of verse 3, teaching what is good. The word good means right or teaching good things. But I love that word because it can even mean beautiful things. It's beautiful when older, mature, spiritual ladies know what matters and live it, never perfectly, but live it with some consistency and are reproducing it in the younger ladies of the church. That's beautiful. That's beautiful.

Ladies, older ladies, 40-something and up, let's say, your years of experience give you a weight of respect, so don't blow it. Kind of what Paul's saying here. Your life should still center in the home even though you've raised your children. Maybe your husband's deceased. It should say, I'm not saying you have to stay home all week long. I don't mean that. Go to the coffee shop. Do what you do. But in your heart, you're still centered in your home so that you might help the younger ladies learn what is right, that you might, verse 4, encourage the younger ladies. Again, the idea could be teach them, train them, or school them and this is a sadly neglected ministry in the great majority of local churches. How many churches do you know where there's a body of godly matriarchal ladies who are intentionally trying to encourage the younger ladies in these duties? Well, God's raising that up here, and I'm very happy about that and I think God's very happy about that.

Now, in verse 4, after he says that they are to encourage the young women, the idea behind that phrase, encourage, is literally to bring these young ladies to their senses, to help these young ladies be sober-minded, in contrast to not be insane or unsound in their thinking, to teach the younger ladies the disciplines and the joys of sane thinking when it

concerns their life's purpose and God's will for their life. Now, the way I count it, there are seven, if you will, disciplines and blessings Paul's laid out here for the older ladies to teach the younger ladies. We've talked about most of these. Uh, one, love your husbands. Today we'll have two, love your children. Today we'll cover number three, sensible. Today we'll cover number four, pure. Today we'll cover number five, workers at home. And we've already covered number six, kind. And we've already covered number seven, being subject to your own husbands. So we look at that, love your husbands, love your children, sensible, pure, be workers at home, kind, being subject to your own husbands. You know what that is, ladies? That's a load. God has loaded you down. That's why I say to you, it's not my call whether or not you have any gainful employment outside the home. There are some super women. It's a woman who can pull it off seems like that's between you, the word of God and your husband. But here's what I'm saying, you already have a job, whatever else you're doing is moonlighting. You have a job. Now certainly modern conveniences have made it a lot easier but instead of maybe having a heart... here's what I want more than anything, church, is that we think this way, we focus this way, then the other things about how much of whatever you do that works itself out if your hearts turned toward your home.

Mothers and older ladies in general often do not have a plan to train their daughters concerning these seven disciplines. It seems that there's little or no intentionality about these things. Many mothers, maybe not premeditatedly, but in effect suppose they are wiser than God's word. They do not have a deliberate agenda to disciple their daughters so that these daughters do not believe the lie that a woman's best and a woman's flourishing is found in that world out there, specifically a career in this world. That's the first lie, that your blessedness in life, your usefulness is not centered in the world out there. The second lie that's connected to it is that happiness in life is the goal. That is not true. Happiness is a very low goal to have. Happiness happens off and on as you live your purpose but happiness is not the goal, your purpose of glorifying God according to his word is the goal. And here's the powerful and beautiful thing about it, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things," including happiness, "will be added unto you." You put God's purposes and God's glory first and you find more happiness than if you put happiness first. And we see that over and over and over again as the world forsakes God, drives toward their own ideas of what's right, good and happy for them, and then the years roll by and they're miserable. It doesn't work and it doesn't glorify God.

Now, let me give you an example of what maybe in our present context could be unsound thinking, Paul's words here, insane thinking. Here's insane thinking, maybe when we talk about the approach to raising daughters, all right? Insane thinking when we talk about raising daughters. First of all, in elementary school, then through junior high, then into high school, too often we're basically saying, "You go, baby, and you get involved in everything you can. I mean, have the full experience. Have all the fun you can while you're here. You deserve it. Go for it." Then our daughters go off to college, have the full college experience. "You deserve it, baby. Have fun while you can." So from life, so for life rather, since at least junior high school, so many of our daughters' lives have been one fun adventure, one fun experience after another, one pleasure after another, one

dopamine rush after another dopamine rush. Then they get to their mid-twenties. Their moms love Jesus. Their dads love Jesus. They were in the church and they love Jesus and they open their Bibles and they find this guy they're gonna marry. They open their Bibles and they read the word of God and they see these weighty duties, loving babies and loving their husbands and being subject to their husbands in all things and be a worker, keeper of the home, and they look at these duties and they seem rather strange to them. These duties seem rather foreign to them. "I mean, taking care of a husband, taking care of children, working hard in my home, that's difficult stuff and I don't have a clue where to start. It looks rather mundane. It looks no fun." All their training is to get a degree and look to the world so they go get a job and try to find fulfillment there and they decide the biblical priorities of being a wife and a mother and a homemaker, "Well, we know that's important, we'll check those boxes off in our spare time." That's insane thinking. Not you can't do any of those other things but your priorities need to be God's priorities. I don't want you to be another proof that God's word is right and your wisdom wrong. I've seen far too much in the ministry.

But you know what doesn't end there, this backwards thinking, this upside down thinking, and it's not again that the daughter doing a lot of those things is wrong in and of itself. What's wrong is there was no priority on what God says the main thing is. And ladies, your daughters can read you. They know if it's just verbal acknowledgment or if it's in your heart of heart to put first what God puts first. And then those same ladies reach their 30s, going into their 40s. Life is tough. Too much is going on. They're unfulfilled. They can even get bitter and they say, "Why didn't my mother, who was a Christian, teach me the disciplines of godly and a blessed life, centered in my home, centered in my husband, centered in my children, instead of always pushing me so much into the world?" Here's what I'm saying. I'm not here to beat you up, ladies. That's not my heart. I'm here to rescue you. Can we not just all not judge each other, not condemn each other, but say, "We've been kind of drifting this way because of the pastor's preaching, but probably the word of God, we're going to kind of deal with this drift and we're going to kind of get this thing moving this way." Amen? Just let's just get it moving back toward what the word of God teaches.

I want you to think for a second, I'm married to a woman and I raised three daughters and you can't love them more than I love them, but I want them to have God's truth because whatever else God has given me, and I don't mean this mystically or some supernatural anointing on my life, but I do have discernment, I can see clearly how the dominoes fall and where the end of the dominoes gets you to. I don't want you to get there. If you're an older lady and you say, "Well, pastor, I've let too many of those dominoes fall." No, you haven't. Start where you are. Be humble about the whole thing and let's just all do better. I'm just talking to you as your brother in Christ and as your pastor this morning.

So, I told you the introduction was long, so Paul writes to Titus and says, "Titus," back up in verse 5 of chapter 1, "for this reason I left you in Crete that you would set in order what remains." The phrase "set in order" means to get things straightened out. So it says, "Titus, let's get this straightened out in our churches and particularly dealing with our ladies. Let's get these older ladies out of the wine-sipping fellowships, out of the liquor

drinking parties, flitting around town in their gossiping hangouts. Let's get the older ladies back home so the next generation of younger women will turn out better than they have." So now we come to the final installment on this section of Scripture, we've looked at love your husbands, which again, the Greek word for love there is more of a familial love. I'm attracted, these things are attractive to me. Learn to make your husband attractive to you by learning to love his manliness and his masculinity and his headship that God's ordained for him to have. Don't resent that, ladies. Love that. Learn to love that. Older ladies, help the younger ladies to love their husband's masculinity, to love their husband's manliness, to love their husband's headship. You know what I say here at Grace Life Church? Long live the godly patriarchy because that's God's will. You don't need to be ashamed of being men. You need to be humble men, godly men and when it's time, backbone a backbone like a saw log man, or the man. So we talked about that. Don't need to preach that again, do I? Love your husbands.

We've talked about being kind. We've talked about being subject to your husbands, to your own husbands rather. So today we take up love your children and be sensible, pure workers at home. Can y'all put the title up on the screen because I forgot it. There it is. You're gonna say, "Pastor, how do you forget the title of your own message?" Well, here's why, because I study, study, study, dig, dig, dig, and the very, very last thing I do is outline and title, because I don't want to build a sermon around my title and outline. I want my title and outline to build from the word of God. So, I gave this to Tim right before I came out, basically. Babies, balance, and a blessed home. That's what we're going to talk about real quick, all right?

1. I. Don't fall out fall out of love with your babies. Don't fall out of love with your babies. Now, I don't know of any of you women that's done that. I'm just saying our culture is doing that and it does tend to bleed over into the church. Verse 4, "so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands," here's our phrase, "to love their children." Again, uh it's the word for familial love and attractiveness. Make sure you're cultivating that, "I like the idea of babies." Like it. Is there anything better than babies? Oh my goodness. The older I get, the more I like babies. I don't like changing their diapers, but I do like babies. See, I'm not a good wife. I'm not a good mother.

We live in a day when a considerable number of women of childbearing age do not love the idea of children. That's a fact. First time in our history where the majority of young women of childbearing age do not make a priority having babies and loving babies. Folks, that's going on. Now, we're an anomaly, I know, because we're Christians and trying to follow the Bible, but that's very prominent in our culture. If we're not careful, it's bleeding over into us. They they they are, in a way, saying babies are maybe two, three, four down the list of my priorities instead of being at the top of my priorities. But out in the world and out in the career, well that's where my real priority is and children must not get in the way of my real priorities. That's the spirit of our age and it must have been the spirit in Paul's day too. Why in the world would Paul have to tell the women of Crete, learn to love your children again? Because they weren't loving babies. The God-given maternal warmth and affection must always be affirmed and encouraged and never undermined and never disparaged. One liberal teacher said recently that, quote, maternal

instinct was forced on women by men. What kind of foolish nonsense. Maternal instinct is stamped on the DNA of your very being, ladies. This should be cultivated and encouraged yet the force in the spirit of the ages when you have a baby is find how you can separate that bonding so you can get back to the world where your real life is. That's a lie! That's a lie! That's a lie!

Too often today women want children, but they don't want to be parents. They don't want to be mamas. And loving the idea of children means disciplining yourself to teach your children the biblical duties that goes along with their specific gender and their specific life roles that the word of God lays out. So again, be intentional ladies in these ways and teach these ladies the discipline of loving their babies. We must not as a church drift with this present godless world. You say, "Pastor, do people really not love babies anymore?" I've got one word. Abortion. Abortion. The most God-ordained blessed thing a woman ever will have is the conception of a precious baby and the joys and blessings and responsibility of birthing and nurturing and caring for that baby, and women are slaughtering babies by the millions. That's hating babies. We have one county in Alabama that has more abortions than they have births, the county that contains the University of Alabama. Isn't our higher education doing great things for our people today? Teaching them not to love their babies. Well, we're on the other end of that spectrum working in another direction.

Again, the majority of 30-year-old women today, the peak of childbearing age are childless. Women are just saying, "You know, babies are that's way out there. We don't know about these babies. We've got our lives." All right. Don't fall out of love with your babies. Let's glory in babies. Let's... we've got almost 20 women pregnant. So we probably love babies around here. And I like that. Let's glory. Let's joy in God's blessed gift of children.

II. Be balanced and avoid extremes. The next thing he says here, not only older ladies teach the younger ladies to love their children, verse 5 he says, to be sensible. The word sensible is the idea of temperance, self-control, or one of my favorite words, balanced. Older women have to help the younger women stay in balance emotionally. God gave women such superior capabilities compared to men when it comes to nurturing and caregiving and baby raising. So to this end, he gave them these deep emotional capacities. Women have such deep capacities to feel that. They feel more deeply than men do. But, with that strength, there are corresponding cautions. Ladies, and perhaps young ladies, can be more prone to emotional extremes like, "Is the world coming to an end? Is this bad thing gonna happen?" And it's up to all of us, but particularly the older ladies, must be helpful to the younger ladies to stay balanced and not be given over to extremes, to keep their emotions in check and to walk in sensibility. Once again, why do we find in poll after poll that it is women, and particularly young women, who seem to be way out there on some of these cultural issues, homosexuality, trans movement etc.? Because they feel deeply about things and they feel we ought to be fair, we ought to be loving, we ought to be caring, but they get out of balance and say, so we justify these things. That's where you miss it. Yes, we're caring to all people. We love all people. We're compassionate to all people, but we must not celebrate that which is evil. That's balance.

Well, II was short. III. I only have three. Holiness and homemaking. Holiness and homemaking. In verse 5, needs to be sensible, and then these two things, pure and workers at home and these go together, and I'll try to tie that together as we go on, but pure is the idea of being clean, being innocent. being modest. This includes all areas like one's spirit, one's demeanor, if you will, to be pure in one's speech, to be pure in one's dress and in a crude and coarse culture like ancient Crete and like ours today, women were tempted to veer off from a godly femininity and wholesomeness and purity and become crude and coarse, immodest like the world. The older ladies should be teaching the younger ladies to be pure. One's speech must be flavored with purity, one's personality and spirit must be flavored with purity, and one's attire must be an expression of modesty and purity.

Now let's go to workers at home. The word workers here is the word just for work. So the idea is spend your energies at home. Homemaking is hard work. Hard work takes time. But the blessings of a godly and diligent homemaker are beyond compare. This simply means you're to fulfill the duties of your home instead of like these older ladies of Crete who spent all their time seemingly flitting around town doing other things. Did you all see the interview of Dr. John MacArthur? They interviewed him about Beth Moore who used to be a Bible teacher for ladies and in recent years she's kind of taught more about, "I'm a preacher now." The only problem, God didn't call women to preach. And they asked Dr. MacArthur in a public forum, "What do you think about Beth Moore?" And Dr. MacArthur said, "She needs to go home." That's just what he said. Just threw that out there.

So simply the idea of the older ladies teaching young girls to work at home, fulfill your duties in the home, whatever else you do, that may be fine, but you've got a job. 1 Timothy 5:13 talks about younger widows in the context, "At the same time they learn to be idle, going about from house to house; and not merely idle, but also gossips and busybodies, talking about things not proper to mention." Here they are not living pure because they're too often in places that are not where they ought to be.

Being a diligent homemaker and being pure go together. A young Christian woman's sphere is in her home. She's to be devoted to her domestic duties. She's to be diligent in her work in her home. 1 Timothy 5:14, "Therefore, I want younger widows to get married, bear children, keep house, and give the enemy no occasion for reproach." That phrase "keep house" in 1 Timothy 5:14 literally can be translated "a house ruler." A house ruler. She makes sure that house is ruled so that things are excellent and they are a blessing to the whole family. One scholar pointed out she needs to be reminded she's a house ruler not a husband ruler. Another writer said this is a privilege of highest order and solemn duty that must not be neglected.

It is interesting to me as we think about these things, how it seemed that the enemy takes good stuff and he just distorts it and gets it way out of balance and one of the ways I've seen that is in the recent rise, maybe not so recent anymore, but the relatively recent rise of home shows about renovating and redecorating. Has there not been just an amazing

explosion of shows about renovating and redecorating. Us men hate those shows. And there's nothing wrong with that. I want you to do backflips down the aisle if this last week you watched a show on being a good homemaker, not just redecorating the home. Can I get an amen? You see how the enemy works? That's not wrong. This is not the most important thing. Ladies, how much energy do you spend being a homemaker versus a home decorator? Nothing wrong with that but is it in balance? The primary purpose of the home is not a place to renovate or decorate, to reflect your style or your skill or your creativity. That has its place. That's fine in and of itself. But the driving motivation of your work at home is to be a blessing and a service to your husband and your children and it's your duty to God. A well-ordered, well-run home is not just a help or a blessing, listen to me, it's not just a help or a blessing, it is essential to a family's well-being. No wonder if Satan wants to destroy the image of God in the earth, he'll attack the home and get the ladies out of balance.

Proverbs 31 is a good contrast to our culture today. "She," 31 verses 27 through 30, "She looks well to the ways of her household." That's the center of her life. She "does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children rise up and bless her; Her husband also, and he praises her, saying: 'Many daughters have done nobly, But you excel them all.'" Why? Because she looked well to the ways of her household. He said, "This woman has blessed me so immeasurably." Verse 30, "Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain." It has nothing to do with her being charming, nothing wrong with her being beautiful. You ladies should work at being charming and beautiful for your husband. He said, "Those things pass away, but what you've done for this family has impacted us so much for good, we cannot help but praise you." Ladies, listen to me, you want to end that way. You want to end that way. Everything, listen to me, everything you do in the world, whatever job, whatever career, everything in the world, you are dispensable. Someone else can do it. Everything you might do in the world, and when you get through doing it, that company doesn't give a flying flit about you. They might give you a watch before you retire, but you're indispensable as the wife of your husband. You're the only one. That's it. You're the only one. You're indispensable as the mama of those babies. You're the only mama they got. No child care can be a mama. You're indispensable when it comes to be a keeper of your home. No other woman can do that.

We live in a day of ladies putting their hearts toward the world. Maybe not you ladies so much and I thank God for you, but the world's spirit is that way. Paul saw this evidently in his day because he really speaks to it quite clearly when he talks to Timothy about Ephesus, when he talks to Titus about the island of Crete, and when he talks to the Corinthians about Corinth. He keeps mentioning these same type things so it must have been all over the place. But ladies, let's don't live in a day of hit-a-lick homemaking and sling-together suppers when we're supposed to be workers at home. Now, just as I exhorted the men and do exhort the men that they cannot get up in the morning and go to work thinking about what they want to buy for themselves, that's not what you do. You get up in the morning, you drive out of the driveway, you cast your heart to heaven and say, "O God, I'm going out there today to be a warrior for my one and only, my wife and for my babies. If there's a little bit left over for me to buy a new four-wheeler, I'll buy that." Likewise, ladies, you rise early, you undertake your household duties, and you

pray, "God, this is not about me. It's about my husband and my babies being blessed for your glory." The world's going to tell you your husband's not worth it. Well, I've never argued that he's not worth it. And the world's going to tell you your babies aren't worth it. That's what they're telling you. Your babies aren't worth it. You just check that off somebody else. Well, I'd say they are worth it but God's glory is worth it.

Being diligent about homemaking is a key, not maybe the key, but a key to pure living. That's why I think he puts it together here in verse um verse uh 3. No, verse 4. No, verse 5. We'll get it eventually where he says, be pure and workers at home. For example, in Proverbs 31:27, where it says the godly woman looks well to the ways of her household, she does not eat the bread of idleness, she's busy, she's protected, she's in her sphere. Now let's contrast that with the adulterous woman of Proverbs. Proverbs 7:10, and 11, "And behold, a woman comes to meet him dressed as a harlot and cunning of heart. She is boisterous and rebellious and her feet do not remain at home." There's a connection here between where your heart is, where your energies are, and the purity God expects out of our lives.

Those persons who are idle in their own duties are always too busy in other people's business. In verse 3 of our very text as he deals with these older ladies, he's saying they need to get their act together, he talks about them being malicious gossips, they're busy bodies and gossips, and a gossip always has two distinguishing marks, open eyes or rather open ears and a loose tongue. Proverbs 27:16 talks about like one who takes a dog by the ears and as he has, is he who passes by rather and meddles with strife not belonging to him. He said, ladies who are not diligent in the home are prone to get impure in their habits and in their speech because they stay out there getting involved in things that are not their responsibility. This is just the word of God. I can't change it, okay? Just the word of God.

The adulteress or the impure woman of Proverbs 7 is everywhere but where she ought to be but it's not just the physical location. We're we're more mature than that. Wouldn't it be funny if we could say, "Okay, ladies, during the daylight hours, you only get 12 hours a week outside the home and if you do those 12 hours, then you're godly." We know that's not the way you do it. It's the heart. It's the heart. The key is, do you love your husbands, love the idea of the husband? Do you love your children? Are you striving to be pure and workers in the home? Is your heart there? And in balance, there are those who stay home, but their heart's not there. They're idle as far as their duties in the home and you're the worst of the worst. If your husband works, and you stay home, and you're flitting around all day, not getting much done, you're the worst of the worst.

I'll never forget, I was a young pastor, and um Pam and I, as I told you, we were trying to get our lives in line with the word of God, and look, Ms. Pam and I want to tell you, we need to repent as much as anybody, and we need to reform as much as anybody, and we're working on it. Amen? I mean, we just are. But I I remember I went to the conference at First Baptist Jacksonville, Florida, and Dr. Homer Lindsay was the pastor of First Baptist Jacksonville, Florida, and he was dog's breath tough. Goodnight, he was tough. And he said something about young mothers. He said, "I I tell all the young

mothers when they get married, go out and get a job until the first baby comes." Whoa, wait a minute Homer. That, that is that's not really in keeping with the word. Here's what he said, he said because their mamas haven't raised them with any discipline about their homes and they need to learn some in the world and then come back home and maybe they can do it right. I never heard anything like that before and I thought, "Wow, wow."

Keeping our hearts, keeping our spirit, keeping our emphasis in the home as analogy, you know, just before wicked Jezebel, remember Jezebel, we talked about her last week. Wicked Jezebel, just before she was executed, the Bible says she was looking out the window, because Jezebel's always looking out there to get involved in things that are none of her business. But when the angel of the Lord inquired about where Sarah was, they said, "Well, Sarah's in the tent." All the daughters of Sarah are in the tent, their hearts centered where it ought to be, busy with God's assignment. A woman who takes lightly God's instruction and lives her life loose and free is an easy target for Satan and that's where the impurity comes in. That's why it says pure workers at home because if you get outside the home and you get yourself busy in all kind of things, they're not God's primary place for you, you open yourself up to destructive temptations. Easy target for Satan and he roams about seeking those women who've removed themselves from their God-given protection and their major and primary sphere of responsibility. Eve acted independently of Adam, removed herself from his headship, took on Satan, and tore her house down with her own hands.

Making your husband, your children, your home the center and priority of your life is not oppression. It's not being a victim. It's not something forced on you by men and by husbands. This is the satanic lie of the feminist. Centering your life around the home is the design of an all-wise and loving God, and it is the key to a life of blessing and flourishing and a life that ends well. The oppressors are those who want to drive women out of their God-given roles. Wives and especially young wives, must be prayerful in consultation with their own husbands as to how much time can be wisely spent outside the home, whether it's in gainful employment or some other service or activity. And I'll close with this, because this is so obviously true. Are you listening? The idea that women are free when they serve their employers but slaves if they serve their husbands and children, is a satanic idea. The idea that you're free if you submit to and serve an employer but you're somehow a slave if you submit to and honor your husband and serve your children, that idea is straight out of the pit of hell.

I'm done. I hand the baton off to the older ladies. I've done my job as the pastor.