



Divine Priorities of Wives and Mothers

abounding in love and approving the most excellent things

by Jeanne Vincent

Priority

precedence established by order of *importance* or *urgency*

Our hearts play an important role
in the establishing of our priorities.

*Watch over your heart with all diligence,
for from it flow the springs of life.*

~Proverbs 4:23

I. What is to be the first and greatest choice of our hearts?

A. The answer

1. *You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the great and foremost commandment (Matthew 22:37-38).*
2. Our love for God increases as our knowledge of Him increases, and our desire to grow in knowledge rises out of our love.

B. There are many challenges we face in keeping this our first priority.

- C. If we make this our first heart choice—the one thing that is necessary—the good part—it shall not be taken away from us (Luke 10:42).

II. What would the God we are trying to love direct us to as our next heart priority?

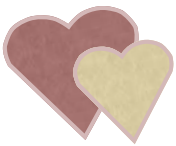
A. The answer

1. So that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands (Titus 2:4).
2. Our relationship to our husbands is to be our greatest earthly priority. A wife's relationship to her husband takes precedence over all other human relationships.

B. Challenges or obstacle that keep us from loving our husbands as God commands:

1. Wrong focus on husband
2. Wrong focus on ourselves
3. Wrong focus on our children

C. Our hearts must focus on obeying God's command to us.



Our obedience is to be a “willing, determined love that is not based on a husband’s worthiness but on God’s command, and that is extended by a wife’s affectionate and obedient heart.”

~ *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Titus*

III. What does God desire the third priority of our hearts to be?

- A. The answer—*So that they may encourage the young women to. . .love their children* (Titus 2:4).
- B. Some of the hindrances that keep us from loving our children as commanded
 - 1. Wrong view of the true nature of our children
 - 2. Weariness at seeming lack of fruit
 - 3. Forgetting the fleeting nature of our opportunities with our children
- C. Again we must have a heart focused on God's command to us.



Elizabeth George says of this love for our children, “There are no conditions. And there are no if’s, and’s, or but’s. And there are no excuses. Where does such love come from? It is to spring forth from a holy, sanctified heart and extend itself freely to our children. It will take all of God’s rich abundant grace and all that we can give to accomplish such a high calling. Loving our children may well be the hardest work-in-the-Lord we ever do!”
~Elizabeth George, *A Woman’s High Calling*

Our love for our husbands and children is energized by our love for God and is an act of love to our Father. The sphere in which these activities occur is to be our next priority.

IV. What is the sphere in which God prescribes us to flesh out these priorities?

So that they may encourage the young women to be . . . workers at home.

~Titus 2:4

- A. The expression *workers at home* is also translated homekeepers, good housekeepers, good managers of the household, and home lovers.
 - 1. What this **does not** mean
 - a. Not just a house cleaner
 - b. Does not forbid ministry or labor outside of the home
 - 2. What this **does** mean
 - a. Home is to be the sphere in which our highest priorities are to be on display. It is the place of our primary obligations.
 - b. “‘Home workers’ describes the active housewife, whose labors are beyond measure and whose efforts will bless the lives of her children and husband in countless ways.” —Homer A. Kent Jr. *The Pastoral Epistles*
- B. Our motivation – obedience to God for the purpose of bringing glory to God; to make home a haven for our family and a place to minister and be a blessing to others.
- C. Obey this command with *diligence*, *skill*, and *wisdom*.

D. Things to remember as we seek to fulfill this large task that often seems overwhelming:

1. Learn to adjust expectations.
2. Learn not to compare ourselves to others.
3. Be *content* with our best.
4. Be realistic not idealistic.
5. Strive for progress not perfection.
6. Needs of our family should always take precedence over the needs of our house.
7. Learn to say no.
8. Do not focus on problems. Focus on finding solutions to problems.
9. Be thankful for what you did accomplish instead of focusing on all you didn't get done.
10. Be flexible. What works at one time probably won't work for all time.



E. Ideas for helping us keep our homes as havens for our families:

*If you are already working as hard as you can,
look for ways to work "smarter".*

1. General ideas
 - ♥ Seek helpful tips and advice from experienced home keepers, books, and classes.
 - ♥ Train your workforce.
 - ♥ Set reasonable goals.
 - ♥ Make time work for you.
 - ♥ Prioritize your cleaning.
 - ♥ Complete small tasks—this can make a big difference.
 - ♥ Do not let the inability to do something the "right way" keep you from addressing a problem at all. There is usually a best way, but also several "okay" ways of doing things.
 - ♥ Simplify!

2. Ideas for specific areas

a. Cooking and planning of meals

- ♥ Weekly, or bi-weekly, or monthly (use computer-generated list)
- ♥ Regular schedule of breakfast and lunch menus.
- ♥ Prepare several meals at one time.
- ♥ Use crockpot to cook hamburger or chicken to put in recipes.
- ♥ Keep a computer generated list of regularly purchased items for home and meals.

b. Cleaning

- ♥ Keep cleaning supplies *handy*.
- ♥ Work to de-clutter your home.
- ♥ Work at organizing
- ♥ Place for everything and everything in its place.
- ♥ Target problem areas.
- ♥ Have a specific *time* for certain tasks.
- ♥ “*Divide and conquer.*” If you cannot accomplish everything each week, divide the tasks up so that in a certain time period each job will be accomplished.
- ♥ Make picking up a part of the daily routine.

c. Doing Laundry

- ♥ Have children help with collecting and sorting laundry.
- ♥ If hanging space is available, leave clothing in dryer just long enough to remove wrinkles, then air dry.
- ♥ When children are old enough, make them responsible for putting away their own clean clothing.

Being a home manager requires organizational skills, problem solving skills, delegating, creativity, diligence, and wisdom in dealing with personnel and labor disputes. ☺ With God's help we can meet all these challenges and maintain homes that are havens for our families.

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might.
~Ecclesiastes 9:10



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

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

~Linda Minnick, *Balancing Homemaking with Other Responsibilities*

Five Questions to Ask when Considering Opportunities Outside the Home

1. What are my reasons for considering this opportunity? Are they selfish or God-honoring?
2. Will pursuing this venture glorify God and honor the gospel?
3. Is this an undertaking that will help my husband?
4. Will it enhance and enrich the lives of my family?
5. Does this endeavor hinder my role as caretaker of my home?

~Carolyn Mahaney, *Feminine Appeal*

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