

## In Defense of Stay at Home Mothers: A Mother's Day Message for 2010

In 1870, only 13% of the women of America worked outside the home. Almost without exception, these were single women working as secretaries or nurses. By 1970, 49% of the women of America worked outside their homes. By 1991, it was 69%. By 1994, the figure had risen to about 71%. And by the year 2000, almost 4 out of 5 women (77%) were engaged in work outside the home. These are no longer single women but married women and mothers who have children and teenagers at home.

We have all heard these statistics till we have become immune to them – America has the highest divorce rate of any free country in the world; over one million abortions are performed each year; only sixty percent of our children are growing up in a nuclear family; teen pregnancies; crime; murder; suicide; and all types of abuses are on the rise and the list goes on and on. It does not take a rocket scientist to conclude that there is something very wrong with our society.

The blame can rightfully be placed in many directions. Included in these would be the devaluing of motherhood in America. I am here before you to encourage our young mothers to never forsake motherhood for money. Do not miss motherhood for a career. Too many today will try and discourage you from being a stay at home mother. I am here to encourage you in your efforts, for the Lord will smile upon you.

Please listen carefully and ponder the words I will share with you today. Become familiar with what the Scriptures teach regarding the subject, "Should A Christian Mother Work Outside the Home?" if you are not already familiar with what God's word says.

It has been sadly said of our generation of Christians that we get our beliefs from the Bible, but our behavior from the world. This observation is certainly true of much that goes on regarding womanhood and motherhood in the church today. Grossly missing from the average woman's life is a Biblical reason and Scriptural premise for what she is doing.

The Bible is to be our handbook for life! 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "**All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine** [teaching], **for reproof** [clarification], **for correction** [changing us when we are wrong], **for instruction in righteousness** [telling us how to live]..." Why? The next verse, verse 17, answers: "**That the man** [or woman] **of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.**"

Before we go any further, you must ask yourself the question, "Do I want to be complete?" and "Do I want to be right with God?" If your answer is yes, then

listen on, for the Scriptures are not silent about this issue. The New Testament contains two significant passages on the roles of mothers.

First of all, Paul expressed in 1 Timothy 5:14, under inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that he desired young widows to ***“marry, bear children, manage the house, give none opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully.”***

Note in this text there are 4 requirements stated:

1. Get married
2. Have children
3. Manage the house
4. Live wisely so that Satan our accuser (the adversary) cannot say anything reproachful about you.

It is true that the context of this passage shows Paul to be addressing young **widows**. However, once a woman is married and has children, would not numbers 3 and 4 on this list apply to her regardless of whether or not she is young or formerly a widow? I believe they would. Mothers are to manage their homes. It is fundamentally their Scriptural duty.

Secondly, Paul writes in Titus 2:4-5, saying, ***“that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”***

Note in this text there are 7 requirements stated ***“that the word of God may not be blasphemed”***:

1. Love your husband
2. Love your children
3. Be discreet
4. Be chaste
5. Be a homemaker
6. Be good
7. Obey your husband

Although all seven requirements are important, our attention is focused particularly on number 5 at this time. Married women with children are to be “**homemakers**” (NKJV). Other translations render it as:

“**workers at home**” (NASB)

“**keepers at home**” (KJV)

“**working at home**” (ESV)

If a mother pursues a **career** over that of being a full-time mother to her children, will she be able to fulfill the divine instructions given here? If her **focus** is on a job unrelated to being a homemaker, will she really be able to manage the house, too? Some may affirm such, but I am skeptical. Will she be the **best** wife and mother she is capable of being if a significant portion of her time and energies are spent away from her family and her home? Or, is it more likely that she will be too tired or lacking in time to properly fulfill the role God assigned for her? And everything we have stated has come directly from God’s holy word.

Christian mothers should reflect upon this list often and examine themselves to see how they are doing in comparison with the divine ideal. Certainly no Christian mother would purposely want to blaspheme the word of God (this is an ever-present danger we must not consider lightly). I fear today, however, that many are doing such ignorantly by ignoring the **fundamental** role of a Christian mother as a homemaker or manager of the home.

“But David, what if a mother only works part-time or is always home when the children are?” It is not my place to forbid women from all forms of outside employment. It is my duty to declare what the word of God teaches. If a mother can work outside the home **and** still be an ideal homemaker or manager of the home, then so be it. That is something for her and her husband to discuss. They will not answer to me but to the Lord. Personally, I think a mother is better served by pouring her time and energies into her family and letting her husband provide for the family materially (if such is possible).

I fear that the devil has conquered so many children from “Christian” homes because mom was too busy working a job to give proper attention and time to working at home for the sake of her husband and children. Our adversary, the devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. He wants women to focus on earning money for the family. He wants women to be so busy that they neglect their children and strain their marriages. He wants women to blaspheme God’s word by patterning their behavior after what is normal in our society instead of molding their lives around the teaching of God’s word.

I believe women are better served if they can stay out of the workplace and the ungodly environment that often accompanies it. It should break our hearts when

pure, holy girls are encouraged to pursue a career or get a job and they consequently end up dating, marrying, and making babies with unbelievers they meet at work. Who is to blame? Ignorant fathers are responsible to a large extent in such cases. The Bible gives the father authority over the daughter until he decides to give her away. Do not take my word for it. Read it for yourself in 1 Corinthians 7:37-38. Where does the Bible instruct a father to give his daughter away to the workplace or to a career? This will make it more difficult for her to later transition to her role as a wife and mother if she has already given herself to her career. Rather, the father is to give his daughter to a godly man for a husband. Until then he should provide for her as one of his own. ***“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever”*** (1 Timothy 5:8). If the Lord ever blesses me with daughters, it would be my intention, by God’s grace, to encourage my daughters to live under my roof until I give them away to their husbands that I approve of (no matter how old they may be).

When might a Christian mother work outside the home? This is a fair question. If a father is unable (or unwilling) to provide for his family (for some reasons we will discuss below), what is a mother to do? The family must be provided for somehow. These are some cases where a mother may be forced to be both primary breadwinner and homemaker. This is certainly not the ideal, but it is a reality for some.

1. Death. In the case where the woman is widowed due to the death of her husband then she certainly would be allowed to provide for herself and her children if there was not enough money left to exist on through life insurance or the estate. Families (relatives) should pitch in to help widows first. If she qualifies, the church should help her also (see 1 Timothy 5).

2. Divorce. If a woman is divorced and her ex-husband does not support her then she certainly would need to provide for herself. Divorce does not leave one with life insurance money and alimony has many loopholes in it. Many deadbeat fathers filled with resentment or bitterness refuse to pay up. This causes a tremendous hardship on the Christian mother. If she does have to go to work, she is wise to have some unchangeable prerequisites before accepting a position:

She will have herself and her children inside the church building every time the doors are open.

Her children will be in the care of Christians when they cannot be in her care.

She will work only enough to make ends meet.

She will maintain consistent family devotions and prayers with herself and the kids.

If these prerequisites cannot be guaranteed, then she should accept that it is not God's will for her to work at that particular place of employment. She should also continue to pray for her ex-husband that he accept his Biblical responsibility of supporting her as is stated in 1 Timothy 5:8: ***“But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.”*** God answers prayer. Do not quit praying!

3. Disability. If a woman's husband becomes disabled and cannot work then she would have to provide work for herself and her family. In some cases the husband may have disability insurance and the husband and wife will be able to live on that. She may need to get a part-time job. If he has no disability insurance she may have to work to support the family in his absence from the workplace until he gets well, if he gets well.

4. Desolate. Sometimes the situation exists whereby a single mother has neither a husband nor a father to care for her. Many single mothers who obey the gospel are left to live with the consequences of their lifestyle prior to their salvation. They are now Christian mothers but were never married. Often, she will have to work in extreme hardship to make ends meet with no man to help her. This is never easy and emphasizes the need for all to rear their children to be pure.

5. Demanded. Sometimes a Christian mother may have a non-Christian husband who demands that she work. If she cannot persuade him otherwise, she must obey him **and** do her best to manage the home also. Ephesians 5:22 says, ***“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”*** And Paul adds in Ephesians 5:24, ***“Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.”*** In his Epistle to the Colossians, Paul says in Colossians 3:18, ***“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”*** See also 1 Peter 3:1-7.

In the five situations above, nothing is said about needing more money as a reason for a Christian mother to leave the home and enter the workplace. In most cases a husband should be able to provide adequately for his family. Doing such may require him to work even harder than he is presently (perhaps at an additional job). It may also require the family to cut back many or all unnecessary expenditures. However, even then if the couple has made some poor choices financially and obligated themselves, debt may force a mother into the workplace also.

Although it is difficult to lower one's standard of living, such can be done. Keeping up with the Joneses should not be your standard. You may have to take some drastic measures to live on one income (e.g., sell your current home and purchase a less expensive one; drive an older car instead of a new one; get rid of

your second vehicle; wear less expensive clothes; quit eating out; quit going to the mall; etc.). It is the devil who says, "You can't make it on one income today!", but the devil is a liar and the father of all lies (John 8:44). Do not believe him! The high cost of living is not the problem for most people today but rather the cost of **high** living.

Art Kohl had this to say about his grandmothers:

I marvel at my two grandmothers. My 95-year-old grandmother reared 13 children and never worked outside the home. My 83-year-old grandmother reared 6 children and many foster children and never worked outside the home. They never demanded their rights. They never insisted on having a deck, new kitchen, carpet, furniture, pool, two cars, nice home, camper, fancy clothes, makeup, shoes, and all this other empty trash that so many women think will bring them happiness today. No, they weren't covetous; **they were content.**

They weren't proud either. They didn't go through life thinking they "deserved" better than just to be a mother and wife. They, having lived fulfilling lives, have children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren who think they are the greatest. Yet they did all this, not living in the prosperity of today, but through the Great Depression and the War.

I fear that many families today are too proud to confess that they are covetous. In fact, many do not even realize their hearts are full of materialism because they think and behave like "everyone" else in this covetous country. Those who are wise will turn their hearts away from things, money, and the pursuit of a high standard of living and back to the precious souls of their children.

So what is a Christian mother to do all day? Once again, this is a fair question. Let us say that you are a Christian mother. For some reason your children are not home. They are sent to school. You are home alone, so what now? Stare at the walls? Right about now comes the temptation to go out and get a job, but there are so many higher and nobler causes that a woman can pursue than to get a job and serve money.

I am proud of the wonderful job our own stay at home mothers are doing with their children. I encourage each and every one of you to continue down this godly path, and remain the mother spoken of in God's holy word.

I also encourage each and every one of you to return this evening and hear 37 things a wife, mother and homemaker can do to make her home the place of comfort God would desire for her family. Maybe you can think of even more!

May God bless all of you mothers and godly women, and may the Lord continue to send us godly women!