

# (New Wine in New Wineskins) 3. God Needs Women

by Zac Poonen

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*God needs women today who will faithfully portray through their lives, the glory that He originally intended to manifest through a woman, when He created Eve.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 2:18, Psalm 127:3, Proverbs 12:4, Proverbs 21:19, John 14:16, Acts 1:8, 1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:24, 1 Peter 3:1-2, 1 Peter 3:4

**Topics:** "Women in the Church", "Godly Womanhood"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the vital role of women in manifesting God's glory as originally intended at creation. He highlights that women are called to be helpers, mothers, and witnesses for Christ, drawing parallels between their roles and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Poonen stresses the importance of submission in marriage, using biblical examples to illustrate how a woman's faithfulness and character can transform her home and influence her husband. He encourages women to embrace their calling as homemakers and mothers, asserting that their contributions are invaluable to the church and society. Ultimately, Poonen calls for women to uphold their God-given identity and responsibilities in a world that often distorts these roles.

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## Transcript

God needs women today who will faithfully portray through their lives, the glory that He originally intended to manifest through a woman, when He created Eve.

### Her Glory as Man's Helper

When God made Eve, it was in order that she might be a helper suitable for man (Genesis 2:18). The glory of this ministry is seen, when we notice that the title of 'Helper' is what Jesus used to refer to the Holy Spirit as well (John 14:16)!

As the Holy Spirit invisibly and silently, yet powerfully helps the believer, even so the woman was created to help the man. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is 'behind the scenes'. So is the woman's to be.

The life of Jesus also is an example to woman; for God's Word states that man is the woman's head in exactly the same way as God (the Father) is the head of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3). Jesus always acted in submission to His Father. A God-fearing sister will act likewise in relation to her husband. Eve's mistake in

the garden of Eden was that she failed to consult her husband before she took a decision. Thus Satan deceived her (1 Timothy 2:14). Where Eve failed, God calls Christian wives today to manifest the glory of submission to their husbands, exactly as Jesus was to the Father and as the church is to Christ (Ephesians 5:24).

Sin entered the universe through the rebellion of Lucifer. Salvation came through the submission of Christ. The spirit of humble submission to God's authority is the greatest power that there is in the universe - for it is the Spirit of Christ. That Spirit conquered all the spirits of rebellion on the cross. When a wife submits to her husband, she is actually submitting to the authority of God's Word which commands her to do so; and she is then being influenced by the greatest power in the universe. Even unconverted husbands can be won over by that power (1 Peter 3:1, 2). If she lives in that submissive spirit during her earthly life, she will be an overcomer, and will qualify to reign with Jesus for eternal ages (Revelation 3:21).

Here is where Satan deceives the woman again. As he led the angels astray, he leads the woman astray - through the spirit of rebellion. A rebellious wife converts her home into a barren wasteland, worse than any desert (that is the implication of Proverbs 21:19). On the other hand, a virtuous, submissive wife, crowns her husband as a king and thus converts her home into a palace (Proverbs 12:4). Your home can either be a palace or a desert, spiritually speaking. It all depends on the type of wife that you are. No wonder that what God values most highly is a meek (gentle) and a quiet spirit (1 Peter 3:4).

Proverbs 31:10-31 describes some of the characteristics of this virtuous wife. Her heart, hands and tongue are described as excellent.

Nothing is mentioned about her physical beauty or her feminine charms, for these are declared to be worthless and deceptive (verse 30). It would be an excellent thing if all women and young girls, and especially young men considering marriage, realised this fact.

The virtuous woman described here, has a heart that fears God (verse 30). This is the foundation for her whole life. She works with her hands, stitching clothes, cooking meals, planting trees and helping the poor (verses 13-22). She uses her tongue at all times with kindness and wisdom (verse 26). She is God-fearing, hard-working and kind - even if she is not beautiful. The glory of God is manifested through her pure heart, rough hands and soft tongue. (Worldly women, in contrast, have an impure heart, soft hands and a rough tongue!). It is in these areas that God looks for women today to manifest His glory.

As a wife, this virtuous woman is a true helper to her husband. She does him good consistently till the end of her life - not in fits and starts (verse 12). In other words, she never loses her first love for him. She also adjusts herself to his profession and calling in life, supplementing his income with her own quiet labours at home, being thrifty and careful in expenditure, so that no money is wasted. She relieves her husband of home responsibilities, so that he can have a ministry in the land for the Lord (verses 23-27). No wonder her husband praises her saying that of all the women in the world (including women prime ministers and women preachers), she is the best of the lot (verse 29). Such a woman certainly deserves to be praised publicly too (verse 31), for she has understood the glory of her calling as a woman.

The New Testament places great emphasis on 'serving the saints' in our homes. "Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay in the night. ....and get into the habit of inviting guests home for dinner" (1 Peter 4:9; Romans 12:23 - TLB). Hospitality is primarily the responsibility of the wife in the home. She can receive a prophet's reward, without ever being a prophet herself, merely by welcoming a prophet into her home (Matthew 10:41). She will be rewarded for hospitality shown to the least of Jesus'

disciples as well (Matthew 10:41). To receive an apostle into our homes is equivalent to receiving Jesus Himself (Matthew 10:40). Likewise, to receive a child in Jesus' name is also equivalent to receiving Jesus (Matthew 18:5). What fantastic possibilities are opened up for sisters in the area of hospitality! The early Christians (to whom Paul and Peter wrote concerning hospitality), were by and large, very poor. Simple food and a place to sleep on the floor however, were all that they were asked to offer the saints. It is when believers seek the honour of men that they feel that they cannot be hospitable, until they are capable of offering rich food and grand accommodation. 1 Timothy 5:10 indicates that even poor widows in the first century, served the saints in their homes!

The glory of God is seen in a woman who has seen her calling as a home-maker.

### Her Calling as a Mother

Adam called his wife 'Eve', because she was a mother. In the pure light of God's presence, in Eden, he knew clearly what his wife's ministry was. Eve knew it as well. Sin and human traditions (influenced by Satan) have now, however, clouded women's understanding, so that she no longer sees her glory as a mother. Children are now called by the Satanic name of 'accidents', when God calls them 'gifts' (Psalm 127:3). They are also considered to be a 'nuisance', when God considers them to be a 'blessing' (Psalm 127:5; 128:4). This is but another indication of how far, even so-called Christians have drifted away from God and become Satanic in their thinking!

Timothy's mother, Eunice, however, was quite different. She had seen her calling clearly. Even though her husband was an unbeliever (Acts 16:1), it did not dampen her faith. She was a woman with a 'sincere faith' (2 Timothy 1:5) who knew the word of God. She taught God's Word to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:14, 15); and more than that - she imparted her sincere faith to him as well. Timothy's home was one where his mother enabled him to breathe the pure air of 'faith' in the midst of a world full of the poisonous fumes of unbelief. He probably saw his mother frequently in prayer, frequently praising God, trusting God in difficult situations and never nagging or complaining - for these are but some of the characteristics of a 'sincere faith'. It is not surprising then that Timothy grew up to be an apostle and a close co-worker of the apostle Paul. His mother's labours finally bore fruit.

That should be a challenge to all 21st century mothers. Eunice, Timothy's mother, did more for the Lord and the church, by being a first class mother at home for 16 to 20 years, than she could ever have done if she had travelled the world as a preacher for 100 years! In more recent times, we have heard of Susannah Wesley, who was the mother of 15 children. Poverty stalked her home and some of her children died in childhood. But she brought up the others in the fear of God, personally instructing each one of them. One of her sons, John Wesley, grew up to be a mighty instrument in God's hands. Millions throughout the world have been blessed during the last two centuries, through his labours and his writings. Susannah Wesley could never have done even a small fraction of what her son did, if she had neglected her home and gone to work to make more money, or even travelled the world as a Bible teacher or evangelist.

In talking about the ministries of men and women, Paul tells Timothy, that although women cannot have either the ministry of teaching or eldership, they can have the ministry of motherhood (1 Timothy 2:12, 15). In the context of the letter, it is obvious that Paul considers motherhood to be a ministry in the church. This is the second ministry that God calls women to - to be a God-fearing mother to her children. Timothy had seen the glory of this in his own childhood home. He was now to teach that to others in Ephesus.

Men excel women in all professions in life. In one area alone do women stand out as unique - as 'mothers'. This, by itself, indicates what God created woman to be. Mothers who have neglected their children either to go to work to earn more money (to live in greater luxury) or even to be preachers, have invariably had the sad experience, later on in life, of seeing their children suffer in one way or another, due to their being neglected in their early years. They can do nothing but regret now. This should be a warning to the younger generation of mothers. If a mother goes to work, for the sake of her family's financial survival, God will certainly give such a family extra grace. But where the motive is luxury and a higher standard of living, she can only expect to reap corruption, for God cannot be fooled (Galatians 6:7, 8).

May the eyes of all mothers be opened to see the glory of their calling.

#### Her Glory as a Witness for Christ

A woman's primary witness for Christ, as we have seen, is by being a man's helper and a mother to her children. But God also calls her to be a witness by her mouth. God has never called a woman in the New Testament age, to be an apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd or teacher. There were prophetesses under the old covenant - the last being Anna. But the only prophetess in the New Testament (after the day of Pentecost) is Jezebel, the false prophetess (Revelation 2:20). Every woman who claims to be a prophetess or preacher today, is therefore a follower of Jezebel. Let no one be mistaken about that fact. All 'Elijahs' of God must resist and expose such 'Jezebels' (1 Kings 21:20-23). In the New Testament, women could prophesy occasionally as Philip's daughters did. (But it is clear that these sisters were not prophetesses; for when God wanted to give a message to the apostle Paul, while he was in Philip's house, He did not use any of Philip's four daughters, but brought a prophet, Agabus, from 50 miles away (Acts 21:8-11)). Jesus never called a woman to be one of His apostles, for He never intended a woman to have authority over man (1 Timothy 2:12). But although none of these ministries are open to women, yet they can be witnesses for the Lord in many other ways.

Mary Magdalene was the first witness of the risen Christ. She was not an evangelist, but a faithful witness who testified about what she had seen and experienced. Every woman should be baptised in the Holy Spirit and fire (like Mary and the other women were, on the day of Pentecost) in order to be such a witness for Christ (Acts 1:8, 14). The restrictions of Indian culture prevent many of the Indian women from ever hearing the gospel through the mouths of men. Only Spirit filled women can reach them. Every God-fearing sister in Christ, should therefore take this responsibility of giving the gospel to those with whom she is in contact - relatives, friends, neighbours, women-servants, etc.

The New Testament teaches that a woman can pray and prophesy in the church too, provided she has her head covered (1 Corinthians 11:5). Prayer is one of the primary ministries that all sisters can engage in, for the building of the church. God is certainly looking today for women who will engage in secret prayer for the fulfilment of His purposes. Women can prophesy too. Acts 2:17, 18 clearly states that when the Spirit is outpoured, both men and women will prophesy. This is part of a woman's privilege under the new covenant. She can share God's word in a spirit of submission in the meetings of the church, provided she does not try to teach (1 Timothy 2:12). Older women are however exhorted to teach the younger sisters practical matters related to their conduct at home (Titus 2:4, 5). 'Helps' is one of the gifts that God has appointed in the church (1 Corinthians 12:28). All sisters - young and old - should seek for this gift so that they can help in the church in various practical ways. There were many such godly sisters in the early church ("Phoebe has been a helper of many" - Romans 16:1, 2. See also verses 3, 6, 12). God desires that there be many in the church today as well.

The covering of a woman's head (taught in 1 Corinthians 11:1-16) is meant to symbolise:

That the glory of man is to be covered in the church (verse 7).

That the glory of woman should also be covered in the church (verse 15) - for a woman's long hair is her glory.

That she is submissive to the authority of the man (verse 10) - whether husband, father or elder.

A woman is also to be a faithful witness for Christ through her clothing. The Holy Spirit urges women to dress modestly and discreetly. "Christian women should be noticed for being kind and good, not for the way they fix their hair or because of their jewels or fancy clothes" (1 Timothy 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 3:3). Clothes are meant to cover a woman's body, not to expose it. No God-fearing sister will ever permit a tailor to cut and 'shape' her clothes according to the fashions of the women of the world. The low-worn sari and the low-cut blouse are marks of worldly women, not of the disciples of Jesus Christ. (Read Isaiah 3:16-24 carefully, to see how God denounces the dress fashions of the worldly daughters of Zion).

Satan is eager to destroy the God-appointed distinction between the sexes. And he has got 21st-century women to act and behave like men in many ways. Domineering wives and women preachers are all part of the drift of Christendom's women further and further away from God and His Word.

In the midst of all this, God needs women who will stay within the boundaries that He has laid down in His Word, and who will manifest the true glory of womanhood throughout their lives. Determine with all your heart then, that you will be a woman after God's own heart, in these last days, in the midst of a sinful and adulterous generation and a compromising Christendom.

God will give you grace for this, if you earnestly desire it yourself.

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