
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES
Institute in the Foundations of Church Leadership
Laurie Boyd

SEASONS OF LIFE

Session 6

INTRODUCTION

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29:11)

A woman of noble character carries with her the lessons she has learned, the skills she has acquired, and the wisdom of experiences learned throughout her life. The phase of life she is in determines how she uses her knowledge and skills.

I. THE SINGLE WOMAN

A. A single woman is concerned about the Lord’s affairs. (1 Corinthians 7:34)

1. Be devoted to the Lord in your body. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
 - a. Work with your hands to please the Lord and bless those around you.
 - b. Work with your mind to help others learn more about God by having a humble attitude.
 - c. Keep your body pure. No sex outside of marriage (Ephesians 5:3; Romans 12:1)
2. Be devoted to the Lord in your spirit. (2 Corinthians 7:1)
 - a. Study the Bible.
 - b. Apply the lessons God teaches you to your life.

B. A single woman has the opportunity to focus on developing the gifts (natural ability) the Lord has given her.

1. Acknowledge the gift(s) God has given you.
 - a. Spiritual gifts (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11)
 - b. Natural ability (Exodus 35:26; 2 Chronicles 2:13; Psalm 33:3)
2. Develop the gifts God has given you.
3. Praise God with the gifts he has given you.

C. A single woman should consider whether to marry or not to marry. (1 Corinthians 7:34; also consider Ephesians 6:1-3)

1. Seek the Lord’s will in your life concerning marriage.
 - a. Ask the Lord what He wants for your life.
 - b. Ask the Lord for wisdom as you think about the plans God has for you.
 - c. Ask God to make his will clear in your heart and mind.
 - d. Accept God’s will for your life.
2. After much prayer, time, and thinking, if the Lord says “No” to marriage, determine if his answer is for the situation you are in now, or for the rest of your life.

- a. If you know you will get married someday, do not worry about when it will be.
 - i. The Lord will bring the person you are to marry to you when the time is right.
 - ii. For now, do the work the Lord has asked you to do, develop your skills, and be content.
 - b. If you know you will never marry, devote yourself to the plans God has for you by doing the work the Lord has asked you to do, developing your skills, and being content.
3. After much prayer, if you are drawn to being married, think about the kind of man you should marry.
- a. He must be a born-again believer in Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14)
 - b. He is a man who seeks God's heart, is wise in the Lord, and is living his life in devotion to God now.
 - c. He is a man who will be dedicated to his wife and family. (1 Peter 3:7)
 - d. He is a man of noble character. (Ruth 2:1; 1 Samuel 9:1; 1 Kings 11:28)

II. THE MARRIED WOMAN

- A. Be devoted to the Lord
 - 1. In all things, put God first. (Exodus 20:3; Matthew 6:33)
 - 2. Marriage to an unbeliever (1 Corinthians 7:13-16)
 - a. If a woman becomes a born-again believer in Jesus after she is married, she should not leave her husband. Instead, she should teach her husband about the Lord by living a peaceful life and respecting her husband. (1 Peter 3:1-2)
- B. Be devoted to your husband (1 Corinthians 7:2)
 - 1. Be a helper and companion (Genesis 2:18)
 - 2. Respond to your husband.
 - a. Physically (1 Corinthians 7:3-5). Sex is a gift from God.
 - i. If there is a problem of disease, the husband and wife should discuss this scripture while also considering how full physical contact could hurt the other person and the family. (Ephesians 5:25-33; 1 Peter 3:7)
 - b. Emotionally (1 Corinthians 7:34b)
 - c. Spiritually (1 Corinthians 14:33-35; 11:3-11)
 - i. Women are not forbidden to speak in church. What is forbidden is disorderly worship. (1 Corinthians 14:33-35; 11:5; 1 Timothy 2:11-12)
 - ii. The husband is to lead the home spiritually. (Ephesians 5:22; 1 Corinthians 11:3)
 - 3. Choose to stay married (1 Corinthians 7:10-11; 39)
 - 4. People are allowed to separate for a time, but not to divorce. (Mark 10:1-12)
- C. Be devoted to your children (Matthew 7:11; Mark 10:13)
 - 1. Give your children good things. (Matthew 7:11)
 - 2. Raise your children so they will know the Lord. (Mark 10:13-15; Acts 21:5)

3. Care for your children. (1 Thessalonians 2:7)
- D. Be devoted to becoming the woman God is creating you to be. (Titus 3:8; Proverbs 31:10-31)

III. THE WIDOWED WOMAN

- A. God cares about the widowed woman (Exodus 22:22-23; Deuteronomy 10:18)
1. God provides for the widow (Deuteronomy 24:19-21)
 2. God sees the reason a person does something. (He looks at a person's heart.) (Mark 12:42-44)
- B. Things widows should be busy doing good things (1 Timothy 5:10)
1. Raise your children to honor the Lord.
 2. Invite people to your home to share a meal or let them spend the night (practice hospitality).
 - a. Practical advice: Only invite other women or husbands with their wives into your home to eat a meal or spend the night. If a single man needs a meal or a place to sleep, let another church couple take care of him. Protect your good name, and avoid temptation.
 3. Serve the Lord in the church (Luke 2:36-38)
 4. Help other people.
 5. Older widows should be good examples and teach younger women. (Titus 2:3-5)
 - a. Encourage younger married women to love and respect their husbands.
 - b. Share the things you learned when raising your own children with younger mothers who are raising their children now.
 - c. Teach younger ladies and children how to love God by the words you say and the things you do.
- C. Things widows should not do (1 Timothy 5:13-14)
1. Do not be lazy. Instead, work to earn money to support yourself and your children. (Ruth 2:2-3)
 2. Do not spread rumors (gossip) about other people. Instead, only say good things about other people.
 3. Do not be in everyone else's business. Instead, take care of your own house and home, serve others, and serve the Lord.
- D. Widows should consider whether to marry again. (1 Timothy 5:14)
- If you do, be sure:
1. He is a born-again believer in Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 7:39; 2 Corinthians 6:14)
 2. He is a man who will be dedicated to his wife and family. (1 Peter 3:7)
 - a. If he has children, be sure you are ready to commit yourself to loving and raising his children.
 - b. If you have children, be sure he is ready to commit himself loving and raising your children.

3. He is a man of noble character. (Ruth 2:1; 1 Samuel 9:1; 1 Kings 11:28)
- E. Family responsibility for widows
1. Children/grandchildren should take care of their mother/grandmother (1 Timothy 5:3; 8, 16)
- F. Church responsibility for widows
- The “church” is not the building. It is the people; the entire congregation.
1. The church should only help widows who are really in need (1 Timothy 5:16)
 2. The church should only consistently help to meet the needs of older widows who are members of the church, have served the Lord for many years, they have a good reputation, and have no family to help. (1 Timothy 5:9-10)

CONCLUSION

No matter what season of life you are in, it is important to work on becoming a woman of noble character by serving other people, working hard, and loving the Lord with all your heart, mind, and soul.