

Buttons Lesson 2 – Buttons That Function
“Are We Doing the Work God Has Called Us To Do?”

Called To Work: God's Way Not The World's

Continuing with the buttons theme this morning we are looking at what buttons are most known for – their function.

We all know the **frustration** of running late and you throw on that pair of pants or that top and the button pops off!

The strings are worn through and it is not longer going to hold your clothing closed.

Buttons on our clothing have a certain job to do, and when they aren't doing their job it hinders us, maybe only momentarily, but it is a hindrance for us proceeding with what we are doing.

We too have work to do! God has called us, **as women**, to some special and important tasks in this life and we need to make sure we are not being a hindrance to the Lord's kingdom by not doing that work. God has called us to work for

- His cause, salvation of the world,
- His Son, Savior of the world
- His Church, our home in this world
- His Kingdom, our reward after this world

Now I will go ahead and admit I have changed this lesson so many times, trying to decide which route to take with it. I wanted to do so much, there is so much we can learn about working for God.

Serving in the church, examples in scripture of women who worked for God, but the more I thought about how this weekend is about just women, I wanted to focus not on roles that apply to women's service but are still works that any Christian can do, male or female, such as

- teaching
- studying
- administration
- giving
- evangelizing,

but I wanted to really focus on the good works God has put out just for women.

God made women special, different from men.

God calls women into a certain role, in a certain relationship,

to serve His higher plan and purpose,

yet to listen to the world today, the media, those who claim to be championing “women's rights”

they say we need more than that to be fulfilled, to have purpose and meaning in our lives. That God's plan for us isn't enough. **But that just isn't truth.**

If we are living for God, doing the work He has called us to do then we are fulfilling the greatest purpose!

Back to our verse from last night, **Matthew 5:16**

“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

We are to let our light shine in this world **through those good works**, through that service He has called us to, and that is how we will glorify God, that is how we will lead others to Glorify His Name!

But what are some of those works we have been called to do in this life?

From the creation of man and woman in the garden, God has placed women in a certain position in the home, in the family.

She has an influence that men do not have.

We have responsibilities that He has called us to and created us for.

Look with me at 1 Timothy 5, in the first part he is discussing the treatment of true widows. Women who have lived godly lives but are now alone, but in this description is something we can learn about how to live long before reaching that stage of life.

These women, to be godly, were expected to have lived and done certain things.

vs. 9-10 says...

“she has been the wife of one man, **10** well reported for good works: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she has washed the saints’ feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work.”

These are the expectations God has for godly women.

- To be faithful wives, who did good works by
- bringing up children
- lodging strangers
- washing the saints’ feet
- relieved the afflicted
- diligently followed every good work.

This was a busy, hard working woman.

Look at this verse in some other translations

ERV - She must be known for the good she has done: raising children, welcoming travelers into her home, serving the needs of God’s people, helping those in trouble, and using her life to do all kinds of good.

GNT - and have a reputation for good deeds: a woman who brought up her children well, received strangers in her home, performed humble duties for other Christians, helped people in trouble, and devoted herself to doing good.

CJB -(complete jewish bible) and is known for her good deeds — as one who has reared her children well, showed hospitality, washed the feet of God’s people, helped those in trouble, and engaged in all kinds of good work.

CEV - She must also be well-known for doing all sorts of good things, such as raising children, giving food to strangers, welcoming God’s people into her home, helping people in need, and always making herself useful.

Phillips - Some such questions as these should be asked:—has she brought up her children well, has she been hospitable to strangers, has she been willing to serve fellow-Christians in menial ways, has she relieved those in distress, has she, in a word conscientiously done all the good she can?

MSG - and have a reputation for helping out with children, strangers, tired Christians, the hurt and troubled.

I think you get the point. **Women are expected to**

- 1) Be faithful, godly wives to their husbands
- 2) Raise Her Children

- 3) Be Hospitable
- 4) Serve The Needs of God's People
- 5) Help People in Distress/Need
- 6) Have a reputation for Doing Good Works

These are some of the areas that are specific to women, and those are the good works we are going to look at today.

1.) Faithful Wife: Submitting To Her Husband

The **Proverbs** have lots to say about wives, good and bad, but one of my favorite verses is **31:10**

“Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth *is* far above rubies.”

A faithful wife is something of great value to God and to her husband. And God has expectations of what that wife should look like, with a key being found in

Colossians 3:18

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”

Submission:

The world looks at this role negatively. And that comes because they do not understand what it really means to submit.

The technical definition of the word is :”accept or yield to a superior force or to the authority or will of another person.”

By calling us to submit to our husbands He has called us to submit to His authority, to God's authority. But this doesn't mean we are door mats with no thoughts or actions of our own, no abilities to think and do and lead.

No, this means that **we are trusting the order God created**. Look as some verses on submission.

1 Peter 3:1-2 “Wives, **likewise**, *be* submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct **accompanied by fear**. ”

there are a couple of things I want to point out here other than just the idea of being submissive.

Look at that word **likewise**. It means just as what he said before.

What was He saying?

Look back into **chapter 2**, he has been talking about submission to governments, authorities, masters.

Just as all Christians, male and female, are expected to show submission to the leaders as unto God, women are to show submission to the leadership of her husband.

Look at **verse 18** “Servants, *be* submissive to *your* masters **with all fear**, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh.”

There is something in both of these verses I want us to notice.

In both of those verses it says “**accompanied by fear**”, “**with all fear**.”

This is key. This is **not fear like**, “I'm afraid of the dark, or the boogeyman”, no this the word meaning respect.

Whether this world wants to accept it or not, for all its talk of equality, men and women are different. God made them this way, and part of a man's make up is his need to feel respected.

God knew this, **God placed in us the command to show respect to our husbands.** When we show them respect they feel like men and feel free to love us as God commands them.

We as submissive, God and husband honoring wives need to show our husbands respect as men and leaders in our homes.

But look at that verse again, just as not all masters were going to be good, not all husbands are going to be good and godly.

To those who are good and gentle and make submission easy

or to those who are harsh and don't act like the men God commanded them to be, those who don't act like they deserve our submission.

Husbands are commanded to act a certain way too, but that is not our responsibility, we can't force them to be something they are not, we can't control it, **but we still have the responsibility to what God** commanded of us.

And He commanded...

Eph. 5:22 "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord."

Submissive to them just as we submit to Christ. But He didn't leave it there. Look at the rest of the section with me, at the explanation He gives.

Verses 23-33

If husbands are doing what God commanded of them, and wives are doing what God commanded of them, how is the family going to function?

It will be successful, it will grow and it will be filled with what each person needs to be whole.

We must remember that when we are submitting to them, they are responsible as leaders of the home and held by God accountable for that role.

Look at **Heb. 13:17** "Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."

They are responsible for watching for our souls, and they must give account. But look at the rest, "Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you."

If we are not doing our role as submissive wives, we will bring grief into the home.

But when we are living as God commands the Solomon wrote in

Proverbs 12:4 "An excellent wife *is* the crown of her husband, But she who causes shame *is* like rottenness in his bones."

We will be a crown to our husband. A crown represents glory and power and is something that is precious and cherished. That is what we want to be.

1 Kings 11:1-3 indicates that King Solomon had **700 hundred wives and 300 hundred concubines** so we would think he learned a little about women.

Look at some other things he had to say...

Prov. 19:13 "the contentions of a wife *are* a continual dripping."

Prov. 21:9 "Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a contentious woman."

Prov. 21:19 "Better to dwell in the wilderness, Than with a contentious and angry woman."

Let us not be this kind of wife.

- Contentious means - causing or likely to cause an argument; controversial. This is not a submissive attitude.

But he also says in **Prov. 14:1** “The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.”

Let us strive to be the women God called us to be, wise women who are helping our husbands and building up our houses to be strong for the Lord.

Something else God called us to do is...

2.) To Raise & Teach Our Children

Whether we like it or not when it comes to kids most of the responsibilities fall to who? From the moment of conception forward it is the woman who does most of the work.

I want to share a little something with you as we start to look at this command....

MOM JOB DESCRIPTION: Long term, team players needed, for challenging permanent work in an often chaotic environment. Candidates must possess excellent communication and organizational skills and be willing to work variable hours, which will include evenings and weekends and frequent 24 hour shifts on call.

Some overnight travel required, including trips to primitive camping sites on rainy weekends and endless sports tournaments in far away cities. Travel expenses not reimbursed. Extensive courier duties also required.

RESPONSIBILITIES: The rest of your life.

- Must be willing to work 24 hours a day, 356 days a year with few breaks.
- Must be willing to be hated, at least temporarily, until someone needs \$5.
- Must be willing to bite tongue repeatedly.
- Must possess the physical stamina of a pack mule and be able to go from zero to 60 mph in three seconds flat in case, this time, the screams from the backyard are not someone just crying wolf.
- Must be willing to face stimulating technical challenges, such as small gadget repair, mysteriously sluggish toilets and stuck zippers.
- Must screen phone calls, maintain calendars and coordinate production of multiple homework projects.
- Must have ability to plan and organize social gatherings for clients of all ages and mental outlooks.
- Must be willing to be indispensable one minute, and an embarrassment the next.
- Must handle assembly and product safety testing of a half million cheap, plastic toys, and battery operated devices.
- Must always hope for the best but be prepared for the worst.
- Must assume final, complete accountability for the quality of the end product.
- Must also be responsible for floor maintenance and janitorial work throughout the facility.
- Must be a chef and short order cook. Developing menus, preparing food at all hours of the day or night and rarely getting to eat your own food while it is still warm.
- Must be a chauffeur to countless school functions, sporting events, doctor appointments, play dates and shopping trips.
- Must be willing to teach. From basic words, colors and manners to having deep theological discussions on the color of the sky. Must be able to constantly answer the question, “WHY?”
- Must be an accountant capable of handling household finances, managing bills and allowances. Able to make a dollar stretch and identify cost-saving opportunities.

- **POSSIBILITY FOR ADVANCEMENT & PROMOTION:** Virtually none. Your job is to remain in the same position for years, without complaining, constantly retraining and updating your skills, so that those in your charge can ultimately surpass you

- **PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE:** None required unfortunately. On-the-job training offered on a continually exhausting basis.

- **WAGES AND COMPENSATION:** Get this! You pay them! Offering frequent raises and bonuses. A balloon payment is due when they turn 18 because of the assumption that college will help them become financially independent.

When you die, you give them whatever is left. The oddest thing about this reverse-salary scheme is that you actually enjoy it and wish you could only do more.

- **BENEFITS:** While no health or dental insurance, no pension, no tuition reimbursement, no paid holidays and no stock options are offered; this job supplies limitless opportunities for personal growth and free hugs for life if you play your cards right.

How many of us would actually take a job in this world with a description like this?

Not many! Yet we know many women who are like this in our lives. We are called to this and more in our lives.

Most of us in this room are probably employed in this career or have graduated up to the next level of it! Grandmother. Although am not personally able to speak on this I have heard the staff you work with is much more fun to be around!

Whether this is the **only job** we have chosen to take in our lives or if we have taken this and added to it **working outside the home**, it holds the same responsibilities and importance.

Raising our children is an important task. How how to do it?

There are so many thousands of **books on parenting**, everyone will have a different idea of how it will be done, and the good thing is, just like none of us are exactly alike, no parenting style is exactly alike. What works in one home will be different from what works in another,

And something wonderful about God is that He didn't limit us with how we can parent our kids, but there are some general guides He has given, some general purposes that drive us as we raise these little people into strong, mature, adults.

Look at one verse that is used a lot when speaking of parenting and child raising...

Prov. 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it."

It is our job to train them in what they need to be adults, to live away from us, have families of their own, and most importantly to know God and the truth of His Son so they can teach it and live it with their own families some day.

Prov. 1:8(ESV) "Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and forsake not your mother's teaching,"

Just as much as the father has responsibility to teach the children, so does the mother.

We are to help to

"bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord." **Eph. 6:4**

We have to be sure we are disciplining them in a godly way to make sure they grow to be respectful of authority.

Prov. 29:15 "The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left *to himself* brings shame to his mother."

And one of my favorite passages is found in **Deut. 6:4-9**

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord *is* one! **5** You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

6 “And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. **7** You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. **8** You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. **9** You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

He starts with the basic thing the family needs to grow in, The love for the Lord with everything we have in us, and we are to keep that truth always, because what is in our heart will come out in our lives. Then we are to diligently teach it to our children. It will be something we put effort into, we strive hard for, we don't let it be something done causally, but we really work at it,

When?

- when we sit in the house
- when we walk by the way
- when we lie down,
- when we rise up

That **pretty much covers the whole day** doesn't it, in the house or out, when we get up and when we go to bed we are to be teaching our children of the love of God.

It says we are to bind them on our hand, between our eyes, on the door post and gate posts. God's Word to be close to us, constantly in sight and kept in mind. **Something we are never far away from.**

If we are doing these things, then our children will see **the importance of God's word in our lives** and that importance **they won't forget** when they are grown.

But **what about those who can't have children**, or choose not to have? Does that exclude them from being women of God.

Of course Not!

Look at verses like **Titus 2:4-5**

Older women are instructed to, “admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, **5 to be** discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”

Every woman, whether parenting her own children or not, has the responsibility of being a spiritual mother. Women need to be willing to teach other women these things, what it means to be godly women.

Can you just try to imagine what life must have been like for Eve.

- Eve was the first woman and the first mother.
- Without a single role model or mentor,
- she paved the maternal way to become "Mother of All the Living."
- I can't imagine not having another woman there to guide her through:
 - Being a wife and the responsibilities that entails
 - her first child being born, all the questions she must have had about her brand new baby.
 - She had no other woman there to guide her through the emotions of losing a child. To bear her burden with her as only women can.

- There was no one to mentor her during her life. I am sure God helped in this role.
- Scripture doesn't tell us but I can't imagine He would let her go through all those new experiences without offering some kind of guidance or reassurance, and that is what our Spiritual Mothers do for us today!

Here is a command to the older, more mature, physically and spiritually, women to instruct and teach the younger women.

Women who are younger in age, younger in maturity, in their spiritual walk with God, anyone who they see who they can be of assistance too. In today's world, we can no longer assume the ladies sitting in the pew with us understand godly womanhood.

Spiritual Mothers are to be teachers through lifestyle example.

* Their reverent behavior, godly conduct, dress, and conversation.

* They are to be the voice of reason. Guiding others with warnings of what to avoid, such as fault-finding, gossip, false accusations, drunkenness.

* They are to guide in

- loving their husbands, being what it means to be submissive
- loving and raising their children,
- being sensible,
- being chaste (sexually pure),
- how to be homemakers
- All of this for a purpose. To help guide those who are growing in such a way to that (verse 5) the word of God may not be blasphemed!

A teacher in such ways will help guide a new generation up in Godly living, will help give young women the chance to grow and serve in their own spiritual ministry, and help strengthen and guard the sanctity of the home.

The last Three Things about being a Godly Woman and Doing those Good Works for Him we are going to lump together under the idea of

3) Being Hospitable

The godly woman was to work at

- 1) Being Hospitable
- 2) Serving The Needs of God's People
- 3) Helped People in Distress/Need

Let's face it, for all the things men can do well, women are still the ones who are more hospitable.

There is something so warm and comforting when you walk into the house of one who is truly hospitable.

One who welcomes you in, makes you feel at home, like you belong. This is a gift God gave to women that is not to be overlooked or diminished.

In today's society, hospitality is not what it once was.

Neighbors barely know one another, never mind inviting them into their homes.

This is something so special and that needs not be lost.

The family of God needs women who are hospitable, welcoming!

I think of Sarah in Genesis 18, who did not balk a moment when Abraham came bursting into the tent to have her make cakes of bread for their three guests who suddenly arrived.

I think of my own Granny Sarah who make all who came into her house feel like they could stay forever!

Think of the Shunammite woman in 2 Kings 4:8-13 who did not wait to be asked about a need, she saw one, had the ability to help and she helped Elisha with no requests for anything in return.

In **Luke 8:1-3** we read of “Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons,³ and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod’s steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance.”

These women are mentioned by name because of their hospitality in caring for the Lord's needs. These women provided for Jesus in each city from their own substance. They gave what they had to serve Him and make sure His needs were met.

That is what we are called to do.

- Are we making sure God's needs are met?
- If there is a need in the church, in our families, our neighborhoods, are we reaching out to fill those needs?
- Are we sharing with the Lord, through those around us, of our substance?

Another example is one many women are familiar with, a story that gets taught at many women's lessons, the story of Mary and Martha. **Luke 10:38-42.**

- Jesus has been traveling with His apostles
- and at one point, If we pay attention to the earlier parts of the chapter (verses 1 & 17), at least seventy other men.
- So we have a group here that at minimum is 13 men, up to about 83 or more. But for now let's just assume 13, Jesus and His 12 apostles.
- They have arrived in Bethany after a long bit of travel through the area. read **verse 38.**

“Now it happened as they went that He entered a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha welcomed Him into her house.”

Martha has just opened her home to the Lord, yes, but I don't think she excluded everyone else and made them sit outside on the stoop, do you? No, she invited in the whole crew, **the Lord plus His 12 dirty, sweaty travel companions.**

Can you imagine it?

- Thirteen men who have been walking the dusty roads, in the sun, welcomed into your home.
- I am sure every woman here can relate. At some point in our life we have been around a man who has come in from working in the sun all day. Dad, brother, husband. It is not always the most pleasant experience is it?
- Martha is a brave woman! She obviously has a gift for hospitality. Opening her home without hesitation (at least none recorded). She is the epitome of a servant's hearts. The Proverbs 31 woman of the New Testament, The original Martha Stewart. She is Israel's answer to Betty Crocker.

This lady has a real gift to serve others and shows us what it means to be hospitable.

We can learn from Martha. Her heart which offered her Lord and His companions a place to stay and

rest, food to eat, and be refreshed.

She can teach us so much about working for God as the women He has called us to be.

And let's remember,

- Martha's world is so much different from ours today.
- This would have been a much more difficult time.
- She did not have our modern conveniences.
- Can you imagine trying to prepare a meal a meal for 13 hungry men with no freezer to pull anything from. No microwave. No supermarket to run down the road to, no fast food or catering company to look to for a fast meal.
- What she was offering to these men was going to require a lot of work on her part.
- She was going to really have to serve and give of her self, her time, her resources to care for her guests.

God has given women abilities that men struggle to understand. She can be both strong and soft at the same time.

She can accomplish a multitude of things at the same time and keep going for hours. He has given us the tools and abilities to serve in the work He asked of us.

As we live for Him, as we are striving to serve Him let us never forget that it is For Him.

Col. 3:23-24 says,

“And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, **24** knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.”

Our service in all things is first and foremost to God! We need to work in such a way, knowing that the life we lead, the example that we set could be the only image of God that some people come into contact with. We need to be workers, diligent workers.

Let us remember, it is for this we were created.

Ephesians 2:10 *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **for good works**, which God prepared beforehand, **that we should walk in them.***

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