

## **The Godly Woman as A Wife**

### *Using the Home as a Place of Ministry*

Genuine hospitality shown by committed Christians in a decidedly Christian home is a powerful and needed witness to the Christian and non-Christian community.

I Peter 4:9 in the Phillips translation exhorts us to “be hospitable without secretly wishing you hadn’t got to be!” How many times have we been hospitable - but secretly wished we “hadn’t got to be?” In Romans 12:13 in the Living Bible, Paul writes, “When God’s children are in need, you be the one to help them out. And get into the habit of inviting guests home for dinner or, if they need lodging, for the night.”

So pray, teacher, that this lesson will open the eyes and hearts of the men to ways they can allow God to express Himself and His love to others through the hospitality of their home.

#### **A. Object Of The Lesson**

1. To show how God can use a thoroughly Christian home as a center for ministry.
2. To motivate couples to allow God to express His love to others through the hospitality of their home.

#### **B. Discussion Questions**

1. Is your home a place to which people come or from which they go? If people (including your husband and children) enjoy your home, why do you think this is true?
2. What are some reasons that might keep us from inviting others into our homes? (selfishness, pride, thinking it is not good enough - or it is too good, don’t want to be bothered, etc.) If we *do* invite others in, what could keep this from being “hospitality?” (our attitudes)
3. How would you describe your “neighbor”?
4. If you have given hospitality to some godly people what effect do you feel this has had on: (a) you? (b) your mate? (c) your children? (d) your ministry?
5. Do you have any guidelines regarding offering hospitality to strangers?
6. To whom would we not offer hospitality? (#8) Why?
7. Look up Luke 6:28, II Corinthians 9:6, Ecclesiastes 11:1. How do these verses apply to showing hospitality?
8. What new insights did you get in the area of hospitality from the study?
9. What do you think most hinders your own hospitality? (lack of planning, selfishness, not on priority list, business)

10. Share characteristics of the most hospitable couple you know. (generosity, graciousness, servant heart, well organized, love that treats others as they would like to be treated, unselfishness that means sacrifice, mercifulness that shows sympathy, gentleness that speaks softly)

11. Let's look up the following verses and see what attitudes and qualities important to hospitality are found in them:

- a. Matthew 20:26,27 - (Servant heart)
- b. I Corinthians 13:4-7 - (Love)
- c. Colossians 3:23 - (Wholeheartedness and enthusiasm)
- d. Proverbs 11:16 - (Gracious)
- e. James 2:1-4 - (no respecter of persons)
- f. Proverbs 11:24,25 - (generosity)
- g. I Peter 4:9 (Phillips) - (cheerfully without wishing you "hadn't got to")

*(Teacher, ask them to suggest other attitudes and qualities they can think of)*

12. What are some thoughts on preparing for real Christian hospitality?

a. *For House Guests. Prepare a place* - prepare a bed, room, drawer, and closet space (if available), towels, drinking glass, etc. If possible, add a "homey" touch like a basket of fruit or a fresh flower, etc.

*Prepare yourself* - Be ready for their arrival. Be dressed, well-groomed, etc. Think through on conversation topics.

*After they arrive* - Set aside a time to rest, relax, acquaint them with the house, plan things they'd enjoy doing (good to check this with them first offer several options), RELAX!, make them feel at home!

b. *For Dinner Guests* - Plan the menu ahead of time; make sure you have all necessary ingredients; plan time schedule so dinner will be on time and you will have time to freshen up and not be rushed and harried; plan questions or topics for conversation; be ready to welcome and make them feel at home; RELAX!

c. *Guests Just For An Afternoon Or Evening Visit* - Plan to have the house and yourself ready when they arrive; at some point you may wish to offer coffee, hot tea or iced tea, etc. If you plan to serve a dessert or snack make it simple enough so that preparation or serving of it does not require a great deal of your time. Plan conversation topics, etc.

In receiving any guest in our home, we should concentrate on them (Philippians 2:3,4) not ourselves. Be warm, friendly, gracious, thoughtful, express appreciation for them being there, show love, etc.

13. How can your home be a place of ministry if your husband is not keen on being involved in hospitality? (Ask his permission to have a Bible study or prayer group during the day; have a friend in for coffee; let it be a place of ministry to your children's friends, etc.)

### **C. Suggestions For Conclusion**

1. If you did the assignment share what positive plans you and your wife have to make your home a more available tool in the hands of God for the blessings of others.

2. Let's spend a few moments in quiet meditation and prayer, asking God to show us some specific person with a need to whom we can extend Christian love and hospitality this week (or this month) e.g. perhaps a foreign student, a senior citizen, someone seldom in a loving home situation, a non-Christian couple, or family, etc.

3. Have a time of conversational prayer with regard to whatever areas of need the Lord has shown them in this matter of using their home as a center of ministry. (Teacher, if you are not acquainted with conversational prayer, it is described in Rosalind Rinker's book, *Prayer, Conversing with God.*)

#### **D. Additional Scriptures**

I Peter 3:15; I Timothy 3:2; Romans 14:7; Matthew 5:48; Philippians 2:14,15; Colossians 1:9,10 (Phillips)

#### **E. Possible Projects**

1. Invite a couple or individuals you are seeking to help grow spiritually over for a meal or an evening.
2. Memorize and meditate on several choice verses on hospitality.
3. Offer your home for a Bible Study or prayer fellowship.

#### **F. Extra Helps**

*God's Best Secrets* by Andrew Murray

*Heaven Help the Home* by Howard Hendricks

Audio BSU 120 - The Home as a Center of Worship and Ministry

Audio 1501 - Helping Your Husband in his Ministry; Hospitality