

## **Life Management for Busy Women**

### **Book by Elizabeth George**

Do you ever feel like life is piling up on you faster than you can keep up with? There's too much to do and not enough hours or energy to get it all done? I KNOW you have. We all feel overwhelmed at times and in different seasons of our life. As it always does, God's Word has the answers. This session will share God's guidelines for 7 major areas we all deal with as women and specific disciplines to help us manage those areas.

I love what she says as a goal for this book- **That we may remember that we live life one day at a time.....yet we are living for eternity in that one day! Reminds me of one of my favorite verses of Scripture that has helped to guide me through life and raising 14 kids. Psalm 90:12**

"So teach *us* to number our days,  
That we may <sup>[a]</sup>present to You a heart of wisdom."

Thing to remember is that life management is really SPIRITUAL life management. There are a **handful** of daily disciplines that can ignite in us a passion for the Lord and equip us to live out HIS plan for us a day at a time!

God's Word addresses any need we have in our life at any given time. Scripture is meant to be practical and guide us in whatever we might be struggling with at the time. For instance, I love this admonition: " If you are impatient,, sit

down quietly and commune with Job. If you are strong-headed, read of Moses and Peter. If you are weak-kneed, look to Elijah. If there is no song in your heart, listen to David sing in the Psalms. If you are concerned about politics, read Daniel. If your heart is chilly, read of the beloved disciple John. If your faith is low, read Paul. If you are getting lazy, watch James. If you are losing sight of the future, read in Revelation of the promised land. I could go on, but God's Word addresses joy and sorrow, health and sickness, poverty and riches- anything you might be experiencing!

2 Timothy3:16 tells us "All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for **teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness;**

### **God's Word:**

1. teaches us and grounds us in doctrine theology and truth
2. reproves us- speaks to our heart and points out sin we need to repent of
3. corrects, instructs us- builds us up and sets us on correct path
4. equips us-helps us to serve God
5. guides us- light for our path- how to avoid the wrong path and show us the right way

6. Cheers us- God's Word is our joy even when circumstances are not joyful

## **I. Developing a Passion for God's Word**

1. Refuse to miss a day- It's a determination. The busier you are, the more you need the Word. Elizabeth developed Quiet Times Calendar- you have handout. Simple chart- is it like a thermometer (steady line) or Morse Code (dot, dot, dash, dot , dash)? It could be a visual help.

2. Pray as you approach God's Word- Open my eyes that I may see wondrous things from Your Law." Psalm 119. Helps to look for something specific- whole heart, wisdom for daily life, help with present problem- finances, dealing with anger, anxiety, etc.

3. Consume God's Word in various ways.

**Practical Insight-** I think of busy times in my life- nursing babies, many little ones getting up all hours of night, ministering to my sick Dad, Josh- leukemia (schedule was NOT my own- consults with drs, etc)

LISTEN to Bible CD's at **bedtime**, while **traveling in car** to UVA, while **lying in bed** if sick, **while fixing hair/doing make-up** on busy day, **while cleaning house**,

Not as ideal as concentrated time sitting with Bible- that needs to be standard, but life is unpredictable- got to have a back-up plan.

Podcasts- so many helpful sermons etc you can listen to as you go on your way. I ALWAYS have something I'm listening to in car.

- Place Scriptures on mirror (Kell)- fridg, wherever you spend a lot of time, at computer, index cards with verse on each- to learn whole passage- Review often - meditate. We have SO much spare thought time if you think about it- make use of it for the Lord

4. Find what works best for YOUR schedule- depends on number of kids, what ages, sleep you're getting, caregiving to elderly , homeschooling, husband's work schedule, etc. EVALUATE often. I used to feel so guilty to not have quiet time first thing in am, till I realized it needs to be MY BEST TIME and MY BEST TIME, may not be YOUR BEST TIME or preacher's best time. Busy mom- up with nursing babies, busy little ones- waking up early before they get up NEVER was my best time. I'd fall asleep reading- not alert, sluggish.

My best time changed over the years:

-naptime with little guys- even as some kids grew older, I'd have them have early afternoon quiet time while littles napped. Their quiet time in Word- mine too.

- when all littles and husband worked at night- early evening after littles went to bed

- with many kids- busy household- nighttime was best - when all in bed, I'd get back up

-now- morning is best-ALL That said to say DON'T feel guilty trying to fit into someone else's mold. Your situation is unique. It's ok. **GIVE GOD YOUR BEST TIME- BEST CONCENTRATION, LEAST DISTRACTIONS, ETC**

## **2. Developing a Passion for Prayer**

**I Thess 5 :16-18 " 16Rejoice always; 17pray without ceasing; 18in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus"**

I remember James Napier telling me about his mom, Emma. He said she prayed all the time about all the little decisions of life- seemingly insignificant things. He told me how God showed himself strong in her life and what an impression it made on him watching that.

- I found with life's busy seasons, it is so crucial to develop that praying with out ceasing. Talk to God as you go. Not that you don't need specific times to pray but cultivate praying to God as you go about life.
- Don't know how to pray or what to pray? GREAT book- Praying the Bible by Donald Whitney. (heard about it in Biblical counseling class from Mark) Teaches you HOW to pray through portions of Scripture one line at a time, helping you stay focused by allowing God's Word itself to direct your thoughts and words.
- May help to have prayer journal. I've done this on and off- list of prayer needs, people, missionaries to pray for, needs and answered prayers- Did this as family for awhile- great for kids to see that God does answer prayer. Helps you stay focused

- Remember to evaluate your life and confess sins creeping in- can be so sneaky- stay pure
- Ask for guidance to life's decisions
- Raising kids- new Christian, new parent- would pray about character needs in kids- ask for guidance in how to handle sin in kids- ask God for practical solutions- saw Him answer this SO many times

### **3. God's Guidelines for Your Body**

Body is temple - doesn't belong to us (you are not your own)- I Cor 6:19

Practically what does this mean?

1. Guard your heart- Proverbs 4 From out of it flow the issues of life- how we spend our time is how we spend our life. Evaluate activities we engage in- are they helping me pursue the Lord or distracting me from it?
2. We are to glorify God in our bodies- She points out little pamphlet - My Heart- Christ's Home ( I read years ago)

Clean out the temple:

- the study- reading materials- what are we reading? helping us in our walk?
- the dining room- what are we feeding ourselves with- physically and spiritually?
- living room- where we are meant to meet with Christ- don't neglect this, how are we spending the majority of our time- priorities
- workroom-what are we producing hobbies, ministry etc
- rec room- what are we watching, listening to, participating in, exercising

-bedroom- careful in your purity

-hall closet- make sure you don't have "locked away" place in your life hidden away

3. Again- need to discipline our body- aren't meant to live to please ourselves, but to glorify God with our bodies.

4. Keep a schedule- more about this later, but lifelong pursuit of holiness

#### **4. Managing Your Marriage**

A Christian marriage takes hard work- must be nurtured. Takes commitment and daily management.

Elizabeth's Four Words for Wives:

1. Help your husband (gen. 2:18)

Involves setting aside self in order to make helping your husband a priority.

2. Follow your husband's leadership (Eph 5:22)

We may not always like it but it's God's guideline of submitting to our husbands. it's for our good and God's glory

3. Respect your husband (Eph 5:33) How?

- look at him whenever he speaks

-never talk about him negatively

-ask him- don't make all your decisions without consulting him

4. Love your husband (Titus 2:4) When he is sad, cheer him, When he is noble, praise him, When he is generous, appreciate him, When he is talkative, listen to him, show your love to him

## 10 Goals for a Meaningful Marriage-

1. Center your life on the Lord- don't stress if your husband isn't cultivating his spiritual life- you cultivate yours
2. Pray for him (Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also Matt. 6:21) Prayer changes things- like a wife's heart and a marriage
3. Know your roles (Four Words for Wives)
4. Study him- Be a student of your husband- know his likes/dislikes, be aware of his moods (when he likes to talk or doesn't), his energy cycles, best time to approach him about important life matters, pressures he may have at work etc
5. Serve him- Christ's example- came not to be served, but to serve
6. Follow his leadership Eph 5:23

Elizabeth says, "I've learned that many times I, as a wife, have to do what God is asking me to do-submit-so that He can work in my husband's life. I've seen many times after the fact, that my husband's direction was best

7. Make sure he is # 1

Learn to place him first in our life, our heart and our time

8. Talk things over- commitment to listen to him, discuss problems, decisions, etc Don't go to bed angry- Eph 4:26

9. Few don'ts

Don't be contentious- Prov 19:13

Don't be constant drip that drives one insane- Prov 27:15

Don't embarrass- Prov 31:11-12

10. Try to make each day fun- COMMITMENT TO BE CHEERFUL

## 5. Managing Your Children

1. Teach your children the Word- me not raised in Christian home- didn't even know Bible stories- saved at 16 , married at 18, first child on 20th birthday- learned with. Deut. 6:6-7 **6** “And <sup>i</sup>these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. **7** <sup>k</sup>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”

I took that literally and went to Word - Who is to teach- parent. What to teach? God's Word How to teach? DILIGENTLY. When to teach? ALL DAY LONG EVery day, Where to teach? At home, and everywhere!!

2. Train Your Children Got Bible Concordance on honeymoon- thrilled that every word in Bible was in it.

Prov 22:6- Train up in the way he should go....

Had no clue how to train- so went to Word for every problem/character need/sin

Taught Scripture according to need- anger, teasing, laziness, whining, etc I learned with them.

Store lessons- kids don't just know HOW to act- have to train them. That's why they have parents. Doesn't come naturally.

3. Love your children Titus 2:4

Nurture your love for them, tell them you love them, spend time with them, pray with them, read to them, teach them to love the Lord , teach them the Word

4. Prize your children- Psalm 127:3' Behold, children are a gift from the Lord and fruit of the womb is a reward. Children BELONG to Lord-loaned to us for short time. Teach them character- which is characteristics of the Lord.

#### Ten Disciplines for Mothering

1. Center your life on the Lord
2. Model godly character teaching it to them- learn together
3. Pray for and WITH your children
4. BE there- put other pursuits on back burner embrace this season of life. Time is short and fleeting.
5. TEACH Them the WORD as having answers for every problem in LIFE

#### **6. Managing Your Home**

1. Dedicate yourself to managing your home- devoted, passionate
2. Be a woman of prayer
3. Be aware of basics- food, clothing, cleanliness, safety
4. Follow a schedule- schedule makes things happen. If you aim at nothing, you'll hit it every time
  - Listed all chores to be done- decide who is best able to do this chore for this year- train- check up on, - kids need to know everything to be successful in life- train in all the chores
  - Decide which chores done on which days
  - Make priority lists- things to be done

## 5. Learn to be Organized

- a place for everything and everything in it's place
- grow in it- doesn't happen overnight
- break overwhelming tasks into small doable chunks- whether yourself (change of season) ( writing book)
- or kids- (pick up toys) containers with pictures- matchbox, doll house- picture on shelf too

Ok- let's put all doll house people in this container,etc

- room check/drawer check- motivation

## 6. Be there - make to-do lists

### 7. Decide to do well- whatsoever you do, do for glory of God

### 8. Talk to other women who love taking care of their homes. Ask them for organizational help, tips. etc. Whatever it takes, determine to make your home a heaven on earth for your family.

## 7. God's Guidelines for Friendships

### 1. Be loyal- Prov. 18:24- friend that sticketh closer than a brother A friend loves at all times

Be an incessant encourager- pray for them, send notes of appreciation, be specific in your praise

-prioritize your friendships- only have time for so much before it messes with your priorities for family etc

## HANDOUT- Ten commandments of Friendship

## 8. Managing Your Mind

God sets specific standards for managing our thoughts

Philippians 4:8 "Finally, brethren, whatever is **true**, whatever is **honorable**, whatever is **right**, whatever is **pure**, whatever is **lovely**, whatever is of **good repute**, if

there is any **excellence** and if anything **worthy of praise**, **dwell** on these things"

-Is it true? Or is what I am thinking a lie, a rumor, a suspicion? Am I entertaining facts or hearsay or speculation? Is it true to God's character and His Word?

-Is it noble? Is it my best, highest thought? or is it cheap, second-rate? Is it worthy of me as God's child and of the person it's aimed at?

- is it just? Is it in line with God's divine standard of holiness? Is it encouraging me to do what is right toward my fellow man, to live up to God's Word and His guidelines for my life?

-Is it pure? Is what I'm thinking holy , spotless, wholesome? Could this thought be brought into the presence of God?

-is it lovely? Is this a thought of 100% moral and spiritual beauty or is it tainted with vileness? is it gracious? Is it kind and forbearing or critical and harmful?

-Is it of good report? If someone else were privy to this thought, would that person think it was commendable? Is it worthy of being verbalized? -

-is it praiseworthy? Would this thought merit the praise of others? Would it meet with God's approval?

-is there any virtue? Is this vein of thinking filled with moral excellence?

The Bible tells us to set our mind on things above, not on things on the earth. (Col 3:1-2)

## **8. God's Guidelines for Your Ministry**

After we have given priority to our family( not perfection) , we can step out and begin to use the gifting God has given us to minister to others.

John Wesley was known to say:

Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all times you can, to all the people you can, As long as ever you can.

We are here on earth to serve others, not ourselves and God had given us special gifts to help us accomplish this. Elizabeth shares this illustration, which I have found to be very helpful too in determining what giftings might be yours as regards to spiritual gifts...

There is a fictitious church dinner where the cook drops the dessert on the floor. What happens next?

The server says, " here, let me clean it up."

The ruler says, "Jim, would you go get the mop? Sue, if you will help clean up, Mary and I will fix another dessert. The giver says, " I'll go out and buy another dessert."

The merciful says, " Don't feel badly, it could have happened to anyone."

The prophet says, " That's what happens when you're not careful."

The teacher says, "Clearly , the reason it fell is that it was unbalanced; the tray was too heavy on one side.:

The exhorter says, " to avoid this in the future, you should use both hands."

Some people find it helpful to think, which response would be most like mine?

Another way to determine your area of giftedness is to use the following signposts:

-Your service will bring you joy- Joy is a strong indicator of giftedness

-Your service will bear fruit-your service will bless both you and others

-your service will be affirmed by others-as you use your gifts, others will let you know how it ministered to them and be appreciative of it

-Your service will create opportunities for repeat service-when you grow in your gifted area, and others are blessed, chances are you will be asked again and again to repeat your ministry

-your service will glorify God- it will be obvious to all

## **9. Managing Your Time and Your Life**

Few closing thoughts on redeeming the time

redeeming time means to reclaim recover, retrieve, rescue or regain it.

- We redeem time when we make the most of our life, our limited time on this earth by lining up our life to make the most of opportunities for useful service
  - We redeem time when we make the most of the minutes, hours and days of our busy life
  - we redeem time when we purposefully and prayerfully ask God for wisdom
  - We redeem time when we realize that we cannot manage time. Time is unrelenting, unmanageable.
- We can only **MANAGE OUR SELF.**

SO how do we deal with the time issue so all our good intentions don't get swallowed up in swirling whirlwind of our busy lives?

1. Uncover the time bandits or robbers in our lives:
  - A. Procrastination- Sometimes for fear, lack of organization,, laziness, etc tasks are left undone.  
Must determine **JUST TO DO IT!**
  - B. Poor planning and scheduling- If you don't plan your day, someone else will do it for you. You are the best one to plan, schedule, and protect your day!

- c. People were not on our plan for the day.  
Must determine how much time you can give to people beyond your family. Determine to pray for wisdom as interruptions crop up!
- D. Poor delegation- train your kids in responsibility- It will develop character in their lives and lighten your load. You Can't do it all. Not supposed to
- E. Poor use of phone or screen time- easy to waste precious time - give it a time limit
- F. Junk mail, checking the news etc- again- limit the time given
- G. Priorities out of whack-BUSY-NESS is not good indicator of effectiveness! EVALUATE, GUARD YOUR TIME AND REDEEM THE TIME DAILY  
HANDOUT TO CLOSE- A Prayer for Living out God's Plan