

WOMEN NEEDED

John Edwards

Women have always played an important role in God's scheme of things. Consider the kind of women needed in the world today.

WOMEN LIKE RUTH WHO ARE VIRTUOUS. A virtuous woman possesses moral excellence, goodness and chastity. Boaz said concerning Ruth, *“for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman”* (Ruth 3:11). If you had been Ruth, would you have had the reputation she did? Wisdom literature teaches us, *“A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband...”* (Prov. 12:4).

WOMEN LIKE THE SHUNAMMITE WHO ARE HOSPITABLE. A reading of 2 Kings 4:8-13 shows hospitality at its finest. The woman of Shunem constrained Elisha to eat bread, recognized the needs of a preacher and didn't expect anything in return for her care. Many women today neglect hospitality, thinking it would take too much time, cost too much or be too much trouble. In the words of Hebrews 13:2, *“Be not forgetful to entertain strangers...”*

WOMEN LIKE THE POOR WIDOW WHO ARE SACRIFICIAL GIVERS. When a poor widow threw two mites

into the treasury, she was said to have *“cast in all that she had, even all her living”* (Mk. 12:41-44). If you had been this poor widow, would you have been willing to make the kind of sacrifice she did?

WOMEN LIKE SARAH WHO ARE IN SUBJECTION TO THEIR HUSBANDS. Discussing the adorning of women Peter said, *“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands: Even as Sara obeyed Abraham, calling him lord...”* (1 Pet. 3:3-6). If you had been Sarah, would you have obeyed and revered your husband as she did? Paul wrote Ephesian women, *“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord... and the wife see that she reverence her husband”* (Eph. 5:22, 33). Colossians 3:18 teaches, *“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.”*

HOW TO BE A SUCCESSFUL LEADER

John Edwards

As Joshua succeeded Moses in leadership of the Lord's people, God gave Joshua seven great rules for successful leadership. These success concepts are outlined in Joshua 1:6-9.

BE STRONG. If you're going to have good success as a leader, you must be strong (Josh. 1:6). One reason many are weak is they are looking to the wrong source for strength. The Lord is our strength (Ps. 18:1-2). How strong do you consider yourself, spiritually?

BE VERY COURAGEOUS. The second rule of leadership success is, *“Be thou very courageous”* (Josh. 1:7). Much of your work as a leader will require a great deal of courage. We need leaders today as Paul who, *“thanked God and took courage”* (Acts 28:15).

OBSERVE TO DO ACCORDING TO ALL THE LAW. Joshua was charged, *“That thou mayest observe to do according to all the law”* (Josh. 1:7). That's God's law. We need the spirit of Peter and John, *“We ought to obey God rather than men”* (Acts 5:29).

HAND OR TO THE LEFT. Do you know your right hand from your left? We are not to tamper with God's word, either by adding to it or taking away from it (Rev. 22:18-19). The successful leader is content to just do as God says (Josh. 1:7).

MEDITATE THEREIN DAY AND NIGHT. Ever do any meditating? As *"Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide"* (Gen. 24:63), we need a quiet place apart from the hustle and bustle where we can reflect on spiritual things (Josh. 1:9).

BE NOT AFRAID. Fear keeps us from doing! Remember the excuse of the one talent man for burying his talent? *"I was afraid"* (Mt. 25:25). There's really nothing to fear as the Lord has promised to be with us (Acts 18:9-10). So, *"Be not afraid"* (Josh. 1:9).

NEITHER BE THOU DISMAYED. To be dismayed is to lose courage. Never quit! *"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not"* (Gal. 6:9). *"Be not dismayed what'er betide, God will take care of you"* (Josh. 1:9).

HE WASTED HIS SUBSTANCE

John Edwards

The story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15 cannot but touch our hearts. The statement in verse 13 stands out: *"And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there **wasted his substance** with riotous living."*

A GENEROUS FATHER. As the father of the Prodigal Son, our Heavenly Father has richly blessed us. He loved us so much that He sent His only begotten Son to die for us (Rom. 5:8). As we contact Christ's blood, we have redemption in Christ and take on a new relationship where we may enjoy *"all spiritual blessings in heavenly places"* (Eph. 1:3-12).

A WASTEFUL SON. The Prodigal Son *"wasted his substance with riotous living."* There are Christians today who have left the Father. They are *"fallen from grace"* (Gal. 5:4). It's so sad to see Christians make such a waste of their

substance! Think of the wasted influence, the wasted opportunities, the wasted years!

AN APPEAL TO THE PRODIGAL. Our plea is for the prodigal to come home! Don't waste another precious moment! Come to yourself as the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:17 and come to the Heavenly Father in penitence saying, *"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son"* (Lk. 15:21). God is awaiting your return and so are we. Come home!

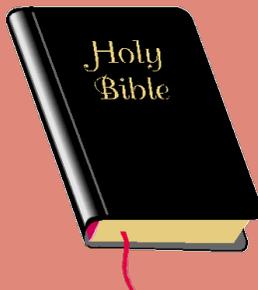
Dolphins swim at speeds up to 35 mph. Physicists can prove that at their size and weight it is aerodynamically impossible for dolphins to swim at such speeds. The dolphin, unaffected by this sophisticated opinion, is the world's most effortless swimmer! Next time someone tells you it can't be done, remember the dolphin! *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (Phil. 4:13).

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