

One Day at a Time - Dispelling the 'Super mum' Myth

Original session by Michelle Warner and Necia McBride

Gold Coast presentation:

Joan Grosser and **Heather McEwan**

Introduction

Workshop of same title given by Michelle Warner and Necia McBride of NZ. We have used their notes as a springboard for this session and need to give due credit to them.

When I (Heather) consider this title, I realize I want to know two conflicting things. First, I want to be told I don't HAVE to be a supermum, but second I want to be told how I CAN be a supermum!!!

The word "Supermum" brings certain images to mind. There is much we find impressive and sometimes intimidating in women we admire.

Joan - Discussion

She seems to be able to DO so much!

Perhaps balancing work and home, relationships and activity. Intelligent, beautiful, adept, creative, happy and has accomplishments galore.

The Christian Supermum can appear all this and more!

She has lengthy, daily devotions and prayer times! She is involved in Church and school or is perhaps homeschooling. She has a beautiful home that she decorates with home crafts, she exercises daily, looks gorgeous whenever you see her and has people in her home for meals every other night. She has 12 perfectly behaved children, is slim as a rake, never looks flustered and has a husband who adores her. She sleeps 4 hours a night and irons, cooks, completes hobby projects and spends time with her husband each evening. She volunteers at the local hospital, fundraises for chaplaincy, and plays piano for services. She does all her home baking, grist's her wheat for her bread, waters 200 trees each morning by hand, never spends money on herself and dresses quietly in designer clothes. She is a full time stay at home mum who goes on mission trips to Africa to offer her expertise as a nurse and does the books for her husband's business and never has to add a column twice. She teaches Scripture in schools, bungee jumps for fun on the weekends and is writing a book in her spare time.

Ridiculous? Yes!!

Yet our perceptions of those we admire can be equally so. The tendency to measure the strengths of others against our own weakness can be soul destroying.

That was a composite of things I admire in a dozen or more women!

Word Meanings and Scripture Base

The word "Supermum" is neither in the dictionary or the Bible.

A myth is untrue.

A major myth we attach to women we perceive as 'supermums' is that everything is **easy** for her. But as every mother knows, what we have to do in a day is rarely that!

Dictionary meanings in this context:

- Super as a prefix means "superior to" or "over".
- Super as an adjective means "of a superior quality or grade, extremely fine or pleasing"

Which version of a super mum do you want to be?

Now none of us want to be superior to one another - but certainly I know, I want to be pleasing to the Lord.

When we perceive superiority in another woman, does that draw us or frighten us? Would we tend to advance or withdraw our friendship?

As Christian women living in a fallen world, every one of us have a different time and story of how we came to the Lord. We all have differing measures of worldly views still at work in us. We are to renew our minds according to the will of God.

The worldly view of a Supermum is both distorted and incomplete. No longer does the world value mothering and home making. No longer does it regard lives of self sacrificing love in high esteem.

Joan - Comment

The Christian Supermum is vastly different to the worldly version.

While the word may not appear in the Bible, we do have examples of them. Here are a well known few.

- Esther
- Mary, mother of Jesus
- The Proverbs 31 woman -often referred to as "The Virtuous Woman"

All very different stories, yet all with superb qualities.
Words like wisdom, courage and faith come to mind.

Virtue in the dictionary is:

Moral excellence or goodness, conformity of life and conduct to moral laws.

The Virtuous Woman in Proverbs 31 is an IDEAL. We don't have to be all that she is. However the principles that govern her actions should also govern ours.

Here is a list of her attributes. All of her attributes should be achievable to one degree or another, just some things will be harder for some than others. The standard doesn't change according to personality.

All of these points can be turned around by attitude.

- Vs 11. TRUSTWORTHY
- Vs 12 .RESPECT AND HONOUR
- Vs 13. WILLING AND CHEERFUL
- Vs 14. ENTERPRISING
- Vs 15. ORGANISED, PREPARED
- Vs 16. WISDOM IN FINANCES
- Vs 17. OPPOSITE OF A SLUGGARD
- Vs 18 .a)KNOWS SHE'S DOING WELL
- Vs 20. GENEROUS
- Vs 21. PREPARED AHEAD OF TIME
- Vs 25. STRONG AND DIGNIFIED (BODY AND MIND)
- Vs 26. SPEAKS WITH WISDOM / INSTRUCTS FAITHFULLY
- Vs 27. a)IS WATCHFUL / KNOWS WHAT'S HAPPENING
b)HAS INTEGRITY
- Vs 30. FEARS THE LORD.

Reactions to her can be varied. We can be intimidated. Overwhelmed. Depressed! Dismissive.

I prefer to be motivated!! Expand.

Duty vs Devotion

GKGW talks about honouring parents out of duty or devotion. Principle is the same in the outworking of our faith-works for the Heavenly Father.

"TRYING"

1 Cor 1: 17 For Christ did not send me to baptise, but to preach the gospel - not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of it's power. For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Human wisdom or duty can never bring lasting satisfaction or change.

The energy that flows from devotion sustains.

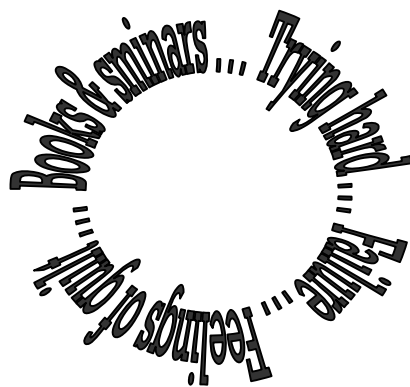
The energy that is forced through duty wears.

Heather illus. Hanging washing in the rain.

Wanting to serve through laying down of self, understanding and love

If you are tired of the 'try harder- failure - guilt cycle, God's life in us is the only answer.

Wheel illus:



- Faith and Works

The Umbrella of Protection

God's promises are true. For too long we've heard the promises preached **without** the 'string attached'. The promises of God are usually linked with the need for our obedience. When we step out of obedience, we step out of His protection. We can name, claim, bind, loose, pray, and plead till we're blue in the face. He is not obligated when we are outside His will.

James 4:17 "So any person who knows what is right to do but does not do it, to him it is sin"

It's not enough to 'not do the don'ts'. We also have to be 'doing the do's'!

1 John 3:21 "Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from Him anything we ask because we obey His commands and do what pleases Him."

If our conscience prickles us, we must take care of it! If we are in known disobedience, we must take care of it.

How do we live a life of God love rather than dry duty?

- Submission to His will and ways.
- Obedience **wherever** He shines His light in our lives.
- Openness and teachability.

He will allow us to get 'wet in the rain'.

The more fierce the storm, the more fiercely we need His protection.

Psalms 91. We must choose to **stay** there.

How do we get started and not be overwhelmed? We start with baby steps. Joan expand.

Over time it may seem like three steps forward, 2 steps back, and that's OK!

A Matter of Priorities

Priorities

"Happiness is not so dependent on whether we do what we like, but rather, whether we like what we do."

"The things which matter most must never be at the mercy of the things which matter least."

(Quote Stephen Covey)

Priority ranking from 'Women's Study Bible'.

1. Your personal relationship to Jesus Christ.
2. Your commitment to home and family - a) spouse b) children and c) extended family.
3. Your responsibility to employer and tasks assigned.
4. Your service to God through ministries in the church and in the community.

Jesus must have first place in our lives. We need His perspective in every other area of life.

Keeping God in first place invites Him to participate 100% in our life. and breaks the vicious cycle.

Activity is not a substitute for relationship.

Time is not necessarily an indication of right priority.

How do we give God priority?

- a) Prayer
- b) Bible study
- c) Fellowship
- d) Lifestyle
- e) Choices

Joan - Comment

Could and Should. Overcommitment. New kind of 'normal' - hard to relax again. Eg this conference!!

Gods Calling

We must operate in the call He has placed on our lives. Neither shall we ignore that call nor shall we attempt to live someone else's call.

There is confidence, peace and security in His calling.

He has equipped you for this time and place in history. All the days ordained for thee... no portion of your life comes as a surprise to Him.

I believe that the gifts God gave me were to equip me to home-make and to otherwise do the work of the Kingdom to which I am called. Not just to give me a stack of fun hobbies!

Seasons of Life

"A woman can have it all - just not all at once"

Priorities don't change but the seasons do.

Gods Gifts and calling are without repentance. Your gifting may not change, but the way you use it may according to the season you are in.

Tools

There are a vast number of tools available to help us learn to function better and equip us with practical help. In this session we wanted to take you deeper. It's of limited value to give you the tools you need but gloss over or omit the Source of power.

Own this for your self. At the back of your outline, there is a list of recommended reading. Don't wait to be spoon fed. Go out from this conference and look into these great tools yourself.

The tools are great and necessary, but time restricts us.

Comparisons to others are destructive.

Every one of us has a unique set of gifts and talents. Use your own, and don't try to replicate another's.

Comparison of another's strength, gifting or possessions destroys our contentment.

Comparison of our strength to another's weakness breeds contempt and is fuelled by pride.

It is great to hold another in esteem, but know they too are human. If you place someone on a pedestal in your mind, sooner or later you'll find out they don't belong there. This can be devastating and even lead to a faith crisis.

Love, honour and learn from others you admire, but don't put the expectation of perfection on them.

Don't:

- Use strength of others as an excuse. "It's easy for her, so I won't even try."
- Use pride as an excuse "I can't do it as well as her and I don't want others to see that, so I won't try".
- Minimise the efforts of others (and inflate your opinion of self) by ridiculing their efforts.

Do:

- Look for what you can learn. "She's strong in this area...what can I learn from her to apply to my life?"
- Rejoice for her!! (Same principle we teach our kids with siblings!)
- Put yourself in the company and under the instruction of Titus 2 type women.

Conviction

Worth

Stonecutters story

There were once three stonecutters at work. A stranger approached and asked the first "What are you doing?" He received a sharp reply "Cutting stone can't you see." The stranger asked the same question of the second man. He answered with barely a smile "Making a living." When the question was asked of the third stone cutter, he looked up with dedication and a smile on his face and replied "I'm building a cathedral".

Time

Time goes by so fast.

Heather:

Had Lauren possibly more than 1/2 her time with us. Only 1 3/4 years left of full time at home children.

Know that time is both short and temporary.

Eph 5:15-17 Look carefully then to how you walk! Live purposefully and worthily and accurately, not as the unwise and witless, but as wise (sensible, intelligent people), making the most of the time (buying up each opportunity), because the days are evil. Therefore do not be vague and thoughtless and foolish, but understanding and firmly grasping what the will of the Lord is. (AMP)

What proportion of your oldest child's childhood has passed already?

Eternal Perspective

I used to grieve for the passing of time with my children This grief was alleviated in an instant (at the time when I was ready to receive this comfort from God)

Share story -Heather

Women grieving in interview over passage of time. Quote "Just wish I could stop time".

We can have ETERNITY with our loved ones.

What is our bottom line, ultimate heart desire for our children? To see their salvation.

2 Tim 3 14 - 15 *But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*

We have this marvellous tool in GKGW. If time passing makes you sad / panic let those feelings motivate you to put your whole self into their heart training, to fulfil all that is our part in seeing that come to pass.

The other reason for grief over time passing for me at least is GUILT. If my time is poorly spent (priorities out of order) I mistake guilt for grief.

I have stepped out of the umbrella of protection!

Praise God, guilt and condemnation are not where He leaves us. These things are to point us to the place of conviction where we can enter into repentance and restoration and the place of peace and security under His wings.

2 Cor 7: 10-11a *Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done.*

Our culture has swung away from the idea of self sacrifice. We must find a balance.

With an eternal perspective sacrifices become easy.

Spiritualising child centred or permissive parenting and calling it sacrifice is wrong.

Operating in what may be essentially a parent centred home and deceiving ourselves in to thinking our children are welcome members, is equally wrong.

Parenting requires sacrifice on our part. No ifs or buts about it. It takes a sacrifice perhaps of a personal interest for a season of life in order to build what is needed into the lives of our children. It does take precious amounts of time to teach, train and build relationship.

So what does a Parent Centred home look like?

- Overcontrol. Kids with insufficient freedoms.
- Angry children through developmental frustration
- Parental agenda in first place, always.
- Children carrying the parents load. Emotionally or through chores.

Love and it's Opposite the opposite of love is not hate. Its selfishness. Love is about the good of another. If it's not about the good of the other, it's about self.

A Sigh of Relief

Know the limits of your parental responsibility. God is responsible for the harvest. Our job is to sow the seed. Trying or expecting control over the harvest is futile. Expand.

We must look towards Jesus as our Source. When we seek first HIS KINGDOM all the rest will be added to us.

Encourage yourself by looking towards our OWN progress. Comparisons don't encourage. They inflate (pride) or deflate (discourage).

Prov 31:18 a) SHE KNOWS SHE'S DOING WELL

AMP 31: 18 a) She tastes and sees that the gain from her work (with and for God) is good.

27 a) She looks well to how things go in her household

Galations 6:4 (AMP) *"But let every person carefully scrutinise and examine and test his own conduct and his own work. He can then have the personal satisfaction and joy of doing something commendable(in itself alone) without (resorting to) boastful comparison with his neighbour."*

Perfectionism

What we see in Proverbs 31 is CHARACTERIZATION. God never expects us to be perfect. The Proverbs 31 woman isn't in Scripture to make us feel guilty. She's there to give be a Godly model.

Priorities are the vehicle to success.

Conviction is the fuel.

God is love. He is patient, He is gentle.`

Isaiah 40:1 He will feed His flock like a shepherd: He will gather the lambs in His arm, He will carry them in His bosom and will gently lead those that have their young.

Just as we love, correct and train our children...so God does with us. He is constantly by our side. He asks us to live within His limits. There are consequences when we stray outside them. But He will seek out His lost sheep and welcome them home.

He will never leave us or forsake us. He will whisper words of love and invitation... if only we will attune our ears to hear.

When You Find Yourself Flagging

Don't get caught back into merely *trying harder* - refuel by:

- Getting back to basics and coming before the Lord.
- Examining your priorities
- Examining areas of resistance or submission to Him
- Giving your convictions a boost .

Don't go it alone. The Father knows we need fellowship and accountability. Get into _____ or start a small GEMS group for that purpose! Get along to church and other _____ encouragement events. Take responsibility to keep this up as an ongoing thing. Don't wait till you run out of fuel...refuel before grinding to a dead halt.

Read, listen, fellowship and pray.

One Day at a Time

Remember baby steps.

Mathew 6:27 *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?*

Don't waste time worrying. Use time wisely, build, train, teach PRAY.

Keep returning to priorities if you think you've gone off course

Covey quote "Healthy families are off course 90% of the time..."

Heather Comment???

"This is not a contest or a conquest...it is a process" (Lisa Bevere)

Title: One day at a time. (Dory: Just keep swimming)

To Finish

"Calm My Anxious Heart" by Linda Dillow. 'Phillis' writes...

"I want to live my life very **PURPOSEFULLY**, regularly reviewing and praying over my purpose in life, loving God intensely, cherishing and inspiring my husband, praying for and keeping connected spiritually with my children, loving women and seeking to lay spiritual foundations in their lives.

I want to live **FAITHFULLY**, believing God for what I cannot see. I want to believe that God can do in my children's lives what I cannot do.

I want to live **CREATIVELY**, creating beauty and warmth in my home, around my table, and in my Bible study. Creativity adds sparkle to a focused, purposeful life.

I want to live **PARADOXICALLY**. I want to go against my selfish nature, against our culture, giving a little bit more that I feel like giving, going the second mile, being like Jesus"

Prov 31: 25 (AMP) *Strength and dignity are her clothing and her position is strong and secure; she rejoices over the future (the latter day or time to come, knowing that she and her family are in readiness for it.*

END

Recommended reading:

Eternal Perspectives / Time

Novels:

Deadline

Dominion

In the Light of Eternity (and others)

Various Video & Audio

Mr God this is Anna

Randy Alcorn

Dr Hugh Ross

Fynn

Time Management Tools

Anything by

More Hours in my Day (and others)

US CM tapes "Time Management"

Aus GEMS tape "Time Management"

Facets Article "Time Management"

Aus GEMS tape "A Healthy Balance"

Facets Article "A Healthy Balance"

Donna Otton

Emile Barnes

Sharon Carter

Heather McEwan *

Heather McEwan (* same content as tape)

Joan Grosser **

Joan Grosser (** same content as tape)

God's Covering

Undercover

John Bevere

Limits of Parental Responsibility

Families Where Grace is in Place

Jeff Van Vonderen

