



030: Should a Mom work outside the home?

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*Think of this from the top down, from God's perspective down.
What does God want me to do? Take out all the obstacles.*

- 1) We're not going to have enough money, or*
- 2) I'm going to be bored at home, or*
- 3) I have this whole career path planned out, or*
- 4) My friends are going to look down on me.*

*Whatever your reason is, put that aside and let God start
developing your mind and your desires and your convictions.
You can trust Him.*

CAREY:

Welcome friends, Carey Green here.

MINDI:

And this is Mindi Green.

CAREY:

And we're glad you're with us for another episode. Are you enjoying your parenting journey? I hope you are. We're enjoying ours. We have adult kids right now.

MINDI:

It's a wonderful time.

CAREY:

A hard time.

MINDI:

Every stage is a blessing.

CAREY:

Yeah, it's a blessing, but it's a challenge for us because it's new.

MINDI:

Right.

CAREY:

And we want to bring up something that may be a new thought for you today, and that is the difficult decision of whether a mom should work outside the home.

Now let me say right off the bat, we understand there are single moms who don't have a choice, and that's an entirely different conversation than what we're going to address here today.

MINDI:

We want to talk to you moms who, maybe you're the second income of two incomes in your household and you're working, or you're considering working, and you've wondered sometimes, would it be better if I not work? Or maybe you're a mom who you really don't wanna stay home.

You wanna be involved in your career and that's fulfilling to you.

CAREY:

We just wanna give you some food for thought because there are a lot of things that influence this decision.

THINGS THAT INFLUENCE THE DECISION TO STAY HOME OR GO TO WORK

The cultural expectations.

MINDI:

Such as all your friends are working and you live in a middle-class neighborhood and you don't think you wanna leave that area, you like your lifestyle.

CAREY:

True, totally true.

Situational pressures

MINDI:

There's also situational pressures. I mean, you may be in a situation where it doesn't look like one income could cope with your budgetary needs month to month. It's a real issue that couples have to deal with.

That's a real thing today with inflation and...

CAREY:

Yeah, absolutely. I noticed gas prices are almost \$4 a gallon again. Yeah. Crazy. So we get that.

Personal desires

And then there's personal desires.

MINDI:

I've heard women off and on throughout the years say, "Man, I would just die being at home all day. I need to be out, I need an outlet, I need a social interaction, I need...", you know, that sort of thing. Or, "What would I do at home all day?" - that kind of thing.

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE ISSUE FOR MOMS TO CONSIDER

MINDI:

As I think about this and wanting to be able to encourage you moms out there... maybe you're a mom who has not begun her parenting journey yet, maybe you're pregnant and you're wondering if you should keep the job that you're in after your baby's born, I want to try to help you moms start this whole decision process from a different perspective. Not thinking, "What do I want for myself, do I want to work or not? Can we afford for me to work or not? What do my friends think about me? What kinds of sacrifices would I have to make?"

Those kinds of questions are all centered around you as a person, your desires. I want to try to encourage you to **start at the very top thinking God's thoughts and asking Him**, "What do You want me to do, God? You've given me these children, so obviously You want me to be a mom, and You are the one who has the wisdom to help me know how to be the best mom."

And so those of you moms who can make the decision - not single moms where the income and the provision of the family depends on you, I'm not talking about that situation right now, - But I'm talking about if you can make a choice to either work or not work. That's who I'm talking to. I just want you to have this attitude of dependence on the Lord and believe that He's going to guide you in what is best.

CAREY:

Yeah, and let me interject here real quickly, though Mindi's talking directly to the woman in the couple, guys, I want you to think about this too. You need to be thinking that same thing about the question of your wife working. What does God want? Forget about the toys that two incomes enables you to have. Forget about the trips you're able to take. Forget about the extra discretionary income that might exist.

Think about, "What does God want in your family in this circumstance?" And then consider what we have to say in this episode.

MINDI'S DECISION TO BE A STAY-AT-HOME MOM

MINDI:

In line with that, I just wanted to share with you my process and the thoughts that the Lord started giving me after Carey and I got married. When we first got married, I was working.

CAREY:

She was putting me through the rest of my college at first.

MINDI:

Right, right. And I didn't want to have kids for 10 years because I loved it being, just the two of us. But actually before that, when we met at college, I knew that I wanted to be a wife and a homemaker. I knew I wanted to raise my kids. And having a degree was not a big deal to me because I knew I was going to be staying home with my kids. And so the Lord planted that seed of thought in my mind even before we got married. And the

reason why I had those desires was because I wanted to be the best wife and mom and homemaker that I could be, and I knew that if my focus was on a career, then I wouldn't have the physical time and I wouldn't have the mental time to be able to put into making a home and raising my children.

And so that's the mindset that I came into our marriage with. We would talk about our finances and if we could handle things. I remember thinking, "I'll sacrifice anything. I'll live in a shack if we have to. But I want to stay home and make our little shack nice and cute and raise our kids in it because that's what's important to me."

And the reason why I was feeling that was because of the desires that God had given me. I wanted to raise godly children. God would give me the picture in my mind of when all the kids are out of the house and Carey and I are old. I wanted to be able to sit there with joy and no regrets because of my children, who are living godly lives and raising godly children themselves. And in God's wisdom, He gave me that future vision to help me keep my calm and my purpose in the present. And I'm thankful for that. That's how He led me to be content and even happy with not working.

CAREY:

Let me add some thoughts here. I just want to highlight, take out a spotlight and shine on this for a moment. First is the incredible importance of what it is we're talking about. We're talking about raising human beings to love and know their Creator. What price can you put on that?

How much would you sacrifice to get to that place when you're just you and your spouse alone and can think well of what God has done in the lives of your kids? I mean, that's priceless. That's just absolutely priceless.

MINDI:

So moms, I get teary-eyed and I can't talk because I'm crying... because it's so dear to my heart, because my children and who they are and who they become is the most important thing to me next to my husband and my relationship with the Lord. And I'm pretty sure that each mom out there would say the same thing. And so that's why I want to encourage you to think of this from the top down, from God's perspective down. "What does God want me to do?"

And take out all the obstacles. "Why, we're not going to have enough money or I'm going to be bored at home or I have this whole career path planned out or my friends are going to look down on me," or whatever your reason is. Put that aside and let God start developing your mind and your desires and your convictions. You can trust Him.

He will be faithful. If He leads you to stay at home like He did for me, He will give you what you need and you will actually find joy in it. If He leads you to work part-time, if He leads you to work in the home, I mean there's so many options. You want to hear from the Lord and you want to hear what He is saying and you. You want to be doing it based on what is best for your family. Because the reality is that your role is to be a wife and a mother and a homemaker. And so that is your first job.

A MARRIED WOMAN'S FIRST PRIORITY ROLE, ACCORDING TO TITUS 2

CAREY:

Yeah, and we say that's your first job because Scripture is very clear that it's your first job.

Now let me make a comment here about Scripture. We often can come to a passage in Scripture like we're going to read here in Titus chapter 2, verses 3 through 5, and think, "Yeah, but that was a long time ago. Their culture was so different, they didn't have women working outside the home, so therefore, because our culture is different, it probably doesn't apply to us." I want to caution you about that kind of approach to interpreting scripture.

Passages where genuinely it is a cultural matter of interpretation usually show very clearly in some way that it's a cultural issue. This one does not address it that way. This one is an instruction, from Paul, to a young pastor, Titus. We assume he was a pastor. He was a leader in the church, at the very least. He's giving Titus instructions on how to teach the women, how to teach the men what their roles are. And so Titus 2: 3-5 here says,

"Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine, able to teach what is good and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind and submissive to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be reviled."

So you notice when he tells the older women what they're to do, it has to do with how they guide the younger women. Because they've already walked the path. They've already raised the kids. They've already been married for a long time. They're to help the younger women learn their role properly. And what is that proper role? We're going to go quickly through just a bullet point list here.

- * They're to love their husbands.
- * They're to love their children.
- * They're to be self-controlled.
- * They're to be pure.
- * They're to be working at home. And some translations say busy at home.
- * They're to be kind.
- * And they're to be submissive to their own husbands.

These are first priority requirements for women who are married and have children.

MINDI:

And I've come to love these verses because they give me an inside look into the mind of God. He's telling me how He wants me to be. And He's telling me how He wants you, mom, out there listening, to be.

So it's a beautiful thing that we have insight into the mind of God. "So, God, what do you want me to do as a wife? What do you want me to do as a mom? Help me."

I'm seeing so many children leave the home and they're a mess. They're into drugs, or they have had many sexual relationships with their boyfriends or girlfriends, or they don't even know if they're a boy or a girl. There's just so much of a mess within even the church today, and I really believe it's because we moms have not taken our job seriously and we've not taken time to train our children within the home. The truth of themselves, the truth of God, how to live life loving the Lord.

CAREY:

And some of that is because the mom's not in the home. She's not there very much. And so daycare is raising their kids, or a grandmother is raising the kids - and praise God for grandmothers who can help - But these are first priority for the mother. Before work, before career, before educational opportunities, before even serving in your church, you've got to determine that this is your responsibility before God. And I love that phrase you said, Mindi, we need to think top down. We need to be thinking from God's perspective down, throughout our life about everything.

MINDI:

So it says love our husbands. We need to ask Lord, "How am I to love my husband well as a wife? What does that mean? What does God want you to do?"

Women are to love their children. "How do I love my children? What is the most loving thing for me to do for my children? Is it to work full-time out of the home? Or is it to work only in the home, or is it part-time?"

CAREY:

Or is it tightening the belt and letting the husband's income be enough?

MINDI:

Right. Being willing to have less. And I can just say on that subject, that our example, of me working at home was not with Carey having a high income. There were times when he was working three jobs, and then when he moved into the pastorate. We were in small churches, so our income was never big. So we're an example of where we struggled all the time. We were always penny to penny, and the Lord provided through surprising ways - generous, loving people in our church, and money out of the blue in the mail all the time. I mean, all kinds of things at just the right time. We had so many times to rejoice and be thankful because God provided, He always provided.

And so my example, our example as a couple is a quote-unquote American problem with me staying home. But because I was willing to sacrifice and Carey and I both were willing to sacrifice, we were able to make it work joyfully.

CAREY:

Let's dig in just a moment to what Paul says here about a woman's priority being to work at home. What does that mean? And why is it commanded? What is it that Paul's talking about?

Well, first off, the role of a woman is based on her strengths as a woman. God has wired women differently than men. Our culture doesn't really think so. Our culture thinks that the parts are kind of interchangeable and so is the gender, but that's just absolutely not true. Women are wired with these unique, wonderful, delightful abilities that men, honestly, generally speaking, don't have. And one of those has to do with relationships and nurturing those relationships and staying connected with children, and understanding them in a way that men generally just don't have.

MINDI:

It's a beautiful thing. I'm sure you women listening know what I'm talking about. When you can tell your child has something on their mind because of the look on their face. Maybe they're hurting and you're wondering what happened. Many times your husband might not even notice that look on their face.

CAREY:

We're oblivious.

MINDI:

And it's not that your husband doesn't care. It's just they don't see that. And many times it's going to come to our minds as a mom, the emotional level that we need to connect with our children, the kinds of conversations we might need to have.

DISCIPLESHIP IS A VITAL ROLE OF MOTHERS

And so think about it, if you're not with your child all day long and they are going through a gamut of emotions and they're being exposed to emotions from their peers in daycare, for example, you're not there to guide them to know how to think, like God wants them to think. They might know Jesus, but they're not going to know much about Jesus because... who's teaching them? And maybe you have them in a Christian daycare, and maybe they're learning Bible verses and Bible stories, but who's discipling them?

I think that's a key word that you need to remember. You as a mom, you are the biggest and most important discipler to your children, while they're in your home.

CAREY:

Let's take a moment to correct a misconception that sometimes happens in the church. The Sunday school teachers and youth directors are not the ones responsible to disciple your kids. You are. That's your responsibility. That's why God gave them to you. You're to be their primary instructor in all things in life. And so don't feel like the pressure's off because you have all these programs you can get your kids in. True discipleship happens relationally. It happens in them seeing it lived out in your life, you coming into their life when they have a problem so you can guide them in the steps, and they grow from that. That's how God's designed it to be.

MINDI:

Let's just kind of fast forward and look at a situation where children are not disciplined in the home. Let's say it's a decent home. It's a "Christian" home. They go to church. The kids are in Sunday school. Awanas, youth group, whatever. But there's not a whole lot of discipling going on. Many times in those situations the kids go astray after they leave the home or when they go into high school or college, because they have not developed a close personal relationship with Jesus, because no one told them how.

CAREY:

They've been good kids. They've obeyed mom and dad's rules, even the Christian rules. But when it comes to the point of them having the wisdom and the discernment to apply those for themselves, they don't have a relationship with God that's truly theirs to draw from. It's been borrowed from mom and dad all this time. And so when they're on their own, they're going to default to their sin nature. They're going to default to their flesh. They're going to do the things that come naturally and seem smart from a human perspective.

MINDI:

It just grieves my heart to think about a mom who doesn't see that as a need, as an important thing in their raising of their kids. Our parenting and our mothering is not only physical care, and making meals, and keeping the house clean, and telling them how to get dressed, or telling them how to clean. The most important thing that we can do as a mom is to help our children in their walk with the Lord.

I remember so many times when the Lord was teaching me something personal and I was realizing how I'm struggling with being selfish, for example. And I was so excited about what the Holy Spirit taught me. I couldn't wait to tell my kids to teach them. "When you struggle with selfishness, this is what you can do. This is what Jesus told me just yesterday in my quiet time. I'm so excited to tell you!" And I can read them a verse and I can encourage them. Then I can help them work it out day to day, year by year, as they're struggling with selfishness. I can remind them, "Remember how we had that conversation, remember that verse? Let's go back to that verse."

So I'm teaching them how to live, how to think. And so when they grow up and they leave the home, they're dependent on the Lord Himself. And Carey and I have laughed many times when we realize that now all of our kids are out of the house, we've raised independent kids. But we notice they're not independent in themselves, but they're independent from us and they're dependent on God. We've taught them how to be dependent on the Lord and to seek Him in their hard times. They're not coming to us a whole lot, you know, "How do I handle this mom and dad? Help me, help me." They don't do that a whole lot because we've already told them how to do that with the Lord.

CAREY:

In this process of discipleship that Mindy's talking about really is what is described in Deuteronomy 6:6-9. We read this often in a parenting context, but we want you to look at this in a slightly different way today. Deuteronomy 6:6-9 says,

"These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when

you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your head and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

God is teaching his people that your diligence in passing these things along to your children is required. This is essential if your children are going to be the next generation of God-fearing people. But something we need to extrapolate from this and understand that's different in our scenario than was in theirs, is that in their scenario, they were in a culture where the family was all together. The dad usually was not working outside the home. He had a carpenter shop or he watched sheep just right out in the field outside the house, the mom was in the home doing her things. I mean, they were a very integrated family union. And so when he says, "talk about these when you rise, when you sleep, when you walk," that's talking about the everyday activities that they would be doing.

Now in our day and age, dad's outside the home working, mom might be outside the home working. All those same day-to-day activities aren't happening on the same level. And so as parents, we have to be very diligent about that. We have to make sure that we're having opportunities to instruct, but we've also got to recognize that though we can plan discipleship in the ways I'm talking about, be diligent about it. We can't plan our kids' responses to that. We can't plan the questions that they're going to have come up. Those may and oftentimes do happen outside the context of the home or when we're not around. And to have someone in the home available to answer those questions when they come up, to notice the kids got something on their mind like Mindy described earlier, that's just invaluable.

GOD'S DESIRE FOR THE CHRISTIAN HOME

MINDI:

I feel like what we're talking about is God's dream for the home, God's dream for the family. And that's what I want to remind you, parents, let's go back to God's heart. What does He want? He has a plan for the marriage. He has a plan for the family. And He's given instruction of what He wants so that the church can be strong, so that the church will be a light to the world and the world will look at the church and look at us Christians and say, "I want that. You love each other so well. Your marriages are so loving. Your children are so good and loving." We need to be a contrast. We need to be the light contrasted to the dark world. I want to encourage you moms and challenge you to think about it.

The question is not, "Should I work?" The question is, "How am I to be the best mom, who loves her husband and loves her kids well, and is busy at home?" There's a real, practical, godly reason as to why we are to be busy at home. The home is the haven for the family.

We need to be able to have our meals planned. We need to be able to clean our home and have it be a place where your husband and kids want to be, where they want to invite their friends over. It shouldn't be all stressful and a total mess, where kids don't want to be at home. I mean, if you're stressed because you came home from a busy day at work and you don't even want to do the dishes or vacuum or whatever, and you're yelling at the kids because it needs to get done - you're not putting your first job first.

I don't want to alienate and I don't want to push away any of you moms who are full-time working. I just want to ask for you to seek the Lord to help you to have His perspective. A top-down perspective, His mindset, and just humbly and openly say, "God, okay, this is a hard decision. I don't like the idea of even changing. If You want me to change my circumstance, help me to have the desire to do that." And if it has to do with finances and that you would have to cut back on things, ask Him to give you wisdom of what to cut back on. You and your husband need to be involved in this together, prayerfully. It might take a few years to get to that point, but no matter what you want to be doing, what God wants you to do, not what you are wanting to do for your career or your life. Because your job right now is to be a mom to the children God has given you.

CAREY:

So friends, in summary, you as husband and wife have to make the decision that's best for your family in God's mind. And we encourage you spend time together, talking about it, the pros and the cons. Make your thoughts God-sized thoughts, God-centered thoughts. What is His will for your children? What is His will for spiritual life? What is His will for your family? And consider, are we willing to make whatever decisions we have to make to reach those ends and then let God show you what they are.

Friends, this is a very touchy subject I know, for some and also a difficult some. So we want to wrap up today just praying for you. And since Mindi is the mom and the one who's had to make these hard decisions herself, I'm going to ask her to pray.

MINDI:

And before I pray, I just want to encourage you moms to reach out to us through email. We would love to continue this dialogue with you. We'd love to pray with you and work through this whole decision process if it's hard for you and your husband, we just want

to be there available and we, trust the Lord to guide you in His timing for His best for you. So please feel free to reach out to us. We'd love to connect.

PRAYER: So Father, we just thank You for sharing Your heart of what You want for the family, for moms, caring for their husbands and their children and being busy at home. Lord, I just pray, that You will begin to spread Your heart's desire through the hearts of the moms who are listening so that they will truly start desiring what You want more than anything. And if there's changes that need to be made that You will show them that, and lovingly guide them to be able to make those changes. I just pray that You will help them to not feel condemnation or criticism or guilt but to know that with Your amazing grace in their lives, they will be able to do what You want them to do in Your right timing. And I just pray, Lord, that You will continue to give these parents wisdom in how to raise their children and to continue to have a godly home. In Jesus name, Amen.



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