

## **Logistics and Legalities** **Being the Face of the Ministry**

As a leader you are the face that everyone will look toward on the subject of your women's ministry. You become the contact that the church will funnel inquiries to. You will set the standard for rest of the team members, in dedication and godly character. If there is a problem, you will be the one the church staff approaches in accountability. Women will stop you in the hallways and church lobby to ask questions, give suggestions, and voice their complaints or "concerns". You will become the face of your church in the community as the women's ministry serves in public spaces.

The spotlight is on you.

Your husband is watching you too. How much time do you dedicate to the ministry... versus how much time you give to the family. Are you in balance?

Your children are watching. Are you giving the ministry and the women of the church your best... leaving little left for those whom you love most?

Your friends are watching. Are you the same person when standing before the church as you are on the weekend hanging out by the pool with your girl friends?

Your critics are watching. They are looking for your hypocrisy to show... they are waiting for you to mess up.

The spotlight is shining from multiple directions.

God is watching, his spotlight burrows past the superficial layers and into your heart.

Do your words and deeds match the condition of your heart and your mind? Are the words of your heart and the meditations of your soul, pleasing in His sight? Are you adorned with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit? Are you clothed in strength and dignity? Have you put on the full armor of God? Do you have a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith?

*1 Timothy 3:1-12 Qualifications for Overseers and Deacons*

*3 Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. 2 Now the overseer is to be above reproach, faithful to his wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, 3 not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. 4 He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full[a] respect. 5 (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) 6 He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. 7 He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.*

*8 In the same way, deacons[b] are to be worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. 9 They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. 10 They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons.*

*11 In the same way, the women[c] are to be worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything.*

*12 A deacon must be faithful to his wife and must manage his children and his household well.*

*13 Those who have served well gain an excellent standing and great assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus.*

Leaders are held to a higher standard, and will be held to greater accountability because their words and actions influence other believers. If your doctrine or theology is wrong, you will lead others down the wrong path. And, if you set a poor example in your speech or behavior, you give the impression to others that it is perfectly acceptable. As Christians we are to be noticeably different than the rest of the world, and those in leadership even more so.

Since others will be looking to you, it's time that we take stock of our own character and witness. How do we present ourselves to the world, to other believers, and is that in line with our inner being? Do we put on a facade? Do we present ourselves as holy women, while we give into temptation and sin in our home life? A secret identity, hidden even from our spouse and children? Is our inner self devoted to Christ, but fear keeps us from shouting it from the rooftops? Or, are we authentic inside and out? Our need of grace, mercy, and love fuels us to give those very things to others in great measure.

I give grace, because I need grace.

I love God, because I need God.

I serve Christ, because He died for me.

I knock, I seek... He answers.

A strong leader, a strong ministry, is not based on fake personalities that appear to have it all together. Perfect Christians? No. Broken women, who God has repaired? Yes. Our greatest gift to others is when we drop the pretense, and share our cracks and scars.... and show where Jesus healed us. I am here, not because of anything I have done or deserve, but because of the immeasurable grace of God.

And through God's touch on our lives and hearts, we become new creations. As we grow more comfortable in that new skin, we become women of great beauty as God transforms us. Our true "image bearer" identity is revealed as we strip away the flesh and succumb to the Spirit. We look different, sound different, act different because we have been refined by fire, washed clean, made new.

So we walk, as women with integrity. Everything we do, is done well ...because we do it for God, not man. Our relationships are strengthened because we treat others as God would treat them. We strip ourselves of pride, we speak with wisdom and knowledge, we are trustworthy and dependable. We do not hide our sin, but we own it, amend our mistakes, and accept God's grace. We cling to faith, even when we don't understand what God is doing in our life or in a situation. We have a prayer life, we study the word, we surround ourselves with those who will raise us up and not pull us down.

Integrity will come with a price. You may have to walk away from certain habits, circles of influence, and things the culture considers entertaining or permissible. We become people who step out in faith, and trust God in the situations that others can't understand. In fact, some will walk away from us... when we no longer ascribe to their same ideals. We do things like step out in faith as missionaries, that even our own families will mock us over. Because, we recognize that our ways are not His ways, our understanding is not His understanding. We hold to the fact that He sees the greater picture, we are called to go (or do, or lead, or provide) and so we do. God asks who will go out, and we raise our hand and say "I will, use me."

We will walk away from everything we have ever known, to go to a place we have never seen, for no other reason than God called us there.

We live out our faith. We attempt big things for God.

We take a deeper look into ourselves.... the words we speak, and we examine our hearts. We stop using certain words, telling certain jokes, and talking about things we have no business. Gossip leaves us, judgment leaves us, and we are filled with the call to purify our words, minds, and hearts with the Holy Spirit. We are ambassadors of God, every where we go and in everything we do.

How do we represent Him to the world? With our integrity, faithfulness, self-control, trust in His lead, honesty, loyalty, faith, and love. We are dedicated and determined to do the right thing, always, even at the cost of our own desires. We do not just hope that God will answer our prayers, we know with confidence that He will, according to His purposes.

We set an example by having an active prayer life, a relationship with God, dedicated readers and studiers of His word, we praise God, bear fruit, and we turn to Him in our times of difficulty and struggle. We advise from the scriptures, not man's understanding. We are good stewards with his blessings, dedicated to the ministries God has called us to... our marriages, our families, our homes, our church, our community, and our world.

When women in the church look to us, they see a leader who supports the vision of the church. She speaks well of the Pastor and staff, as well as other ministry leaders. She understands the biblical model for conflict resolution, she recognizes the gifts of others and helps them find a way to serve with their gift. She leads with strength and compassion, dedication and loyalty, in accordance to the scriptures, and under the authority of God.

A leader of integrity will be above reproach, teachable, ever seeking, and humble in spirit. She serves not for glory, but to glorify.

When you step into the role of leader, as Paul said... you seek a noble task. The Lord will bless you and equip you for any task he calls you to. Paul, loves God, and recognizes that he still manages to do the things he wishes he wouldn't. Temptation and sin will find us. We stand out in how we deal with that sin. Being above reproach doesn't mean being perfect, but that when you make a mistake you can handle the correction. You accept it, grow from it, and are blessed by it.

As you become that public face, understand that people look to you as a model of how a godly woman should live. Model grace, love, hope, faith, forgiveness, patience, self control, humility, integrity, honesty, and adoration for God.

Look to the authority of His word, in all things.  
Pray for His protection over your heart and life.  
Have accountability with your spouse or a friend.  
Always seek to do the right thing, brush off temptation.

Be the image bearer you were meant to be.