

Are You a Control Freak?

It was a typical Monday morning—6 a.m. came too quickly. My eyelids were half opened (or half shut) and my 2-and-a-half-year-old, who loves mornings, was valiantly yelling, “Mommy! Mommy! It’s coronation day!” (If you haven’t seen the movie *Frozen*, then this makes absolutely no sense.) My other vivacious daughter, who is 4 going on 14, came bounding down the hallway too.

I was able to get a few moments in the Word, scribbling something in my prayer journal with a few breaks in between to refill sippy cups, clean up spilled blueberries, and redirect one of the girls to their rooms for a timeout. I then took a timeout myself for a shower. And the day began . . .

Am I Cut Out for This?

Sometimes I wonder if I am really cut out to “manage” a home. I mean, like really have it together—not perfect by any means, but together. Orderly and peaceful.

In my mind, a well-managed home would look something like this:

I get a head start in the mornings before the kids, always one step ahead. Quiet time, coffee, a load of laundry, and a shower would have already been checked off the list. I would be refreshed and cheerful, ready to start the new day and cook a fine breakfast for the family, other than the usual popping a waffle in the toaster. Then, I would properly style my girls’ hair. We would find matching socks with ease. All of the necessary items for the day, such as a packed lunch, wipes, hand sanitizer, etc., would not be forgotten as we head out the door. Ah, sheer serenity.

But, reality for me on a typical day looks nothing like that.

It's frantic and unpredictable. I don't think this is unique for me or for women in my generation. If Susanna Wesley had to pull her apron over her head for a few moments of peaceful prayer while her kids bounded about, then chaos is not a modern phenomenon in the home. Although, Susanna Wesley did have 19 children . . . but I digress.

Home Is a Place to Manage, Not Master

What I have learned is that managing the home is nothing like the scenario that I had built up in my mind. There are two specific passages in Scripture that address how women are to manage their households. (see 1 Tim. 5:14 and Titus 2:4-5)

I have learned that the home is not a place to master but to manage.

In 1 Timothy a direct statement to young widows (and wives, generally) is given: manage the home. Titus 2:4-5 addresses how older women are to teach the younger women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be homemakers, etc. Many people have various opinions on these verses, and a few have taken a lot of liberty in explaining just what "managing the home" means. While I want to be careful not to add to Scripture in my limited knowledge of exactly what Paul meant, what I do know is this: manage is not control.

Life is unpredictable. Each day brings its own set of challenges and joys. I have learned that the home is not a place to master, but to manage.

My husband's shirts may be pressed and hung up, but am I treating him with kindness and respect? Does he feel loved and cherished?

I may give my kids the Martha Stewart lunch of the year, but do they feel noticed and valued, or more like interruptions in

my day?

Treasuring Your Family

I am learning that home management is not a parade but more like crop-plowing—it's a process that occurs behind the scenes. It's hard, dirty and slow to show the fruit of our labors, but it will be worth it in the end. Glorifying God through loving those in our care is at the heart of managing the home, though it's often messy and full of mistakes. I think this is what Paul meant. We don't direct our family like chess pieces but serve them as gifts from God to be treasured and loved.

So, on any given day you'll see this work-in-progress managing my home while stumbling here and there—with some celebrations along the way. As Elsa in *Frozen* would say, "I'm learning to 'let it go.'" This season, like all seasons of life, is finite. I hope to make the most of it by trying not to control everything. Instead, I will entrust it all to the One who is in control of it all. Will you trust Him with your home today?

Taken from Jenna Fleming's blog post "Are You a Control Freak at Home?" on . Used with permission.