



'Living Life Together'

What Oprah Didn't Tell You

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I read the book called 'Do you have a product to sell' a book to publicize, a new diet to promote? Or perhaps you have aspirations to become the next President of the United States. You could spend millions in marketing, promotion or campaigning or you could turn your attention to afternoon television. No matter what you're selling, there's no greater single guarantee of success than getting yourself booked on the Oprah Winfrey Show. If you want an example, think about the time when the Democratic presidential hopeful Barack Obama appeared on the Oprah show on October 18th, 2006. Do you know that Internet searches on the then Illinois senator sky rocked by 358% the week following his appearance? And being on Oprah's Book Club best choices list will mean millions in additional sales. The same seems true about the advice she gives, or her guests give on how to do life and marriage. If Oprah says it or agrees with it, then it must be right.

So, for example, if Oprah lives with Stedman and never gets married because she is wise and speaks using some Christian terminology, I guess it must be ok. The danger is that we take what Oprah says concerning sexuality, orientations and her views on spirituality and accept them because Oprah said it. As we continue our series on 'Living Life Together' taken from (*Titus 2*) we will be discussing (*Titus 2:3-5*) which talk's about Paul's instruction for younger women. With some help from Kathy Spate I want to talk about some things which Oprah never told you (*Titus 2:3-5*)

Kathy Spate

No matter what is said about (*Titus 2:4 – 5*) this morning, it will be controversial. If I just read it, it would be controversial. But what I do know is true from this passage is that there are a multitude of scenarios that women today often find themselves in and there are unrealistic expectations that are placed on women today at home, at work, at school. I will add a caveat before I go any further, much of what is said this morning can also be put into application for men old and young and the passage does go on to address that topic.

The topic of women their role in society is a hot topic mainly for talk shows. And many have tried to define for women what our roles and duties in life should be and how we should act in those duties and roles. Since I am up here, Dave let me come up here again I would like to offer a novel idea why don't we dump Oprah and Dr. Phil and all that society has determined through the ages as to the way women should be, and turn to God's Word to help us define what that might be? But not only how we as women are to be in the world but as Paul presents it in Titus that the young women in the local church are to set the example for family life.

The first account is (*Titus 2:4 – 5*)

A. To: "love their husbands" First, younger women should "love their husbands," i.e., have tender affection for them. That sounds easy enough. Is it always? No, it is not always easy to love it is a determination, a choice. But what happens if your husband is not loveable: there is still a command to love your husband. You may be smarter than he is; you may make more money than he does; you are prettier than he is (hopefully); maybe you are not as appreciated as you should be; but the bases in the relationship must be love, so love your husband. Affirm his leadership role. I did not say bow to his whims and be his slave, but love him. The following relate to loving our husbands, older women are to model to the younger women in our church how to love your husband.

1. Be his lover. This is not something that you are to use for leverage in the relationship. A husband should not have to earn the right to enjoy intimacy in marriage.
2. Be his recreational companion. You can't do everything that he can do, but you can find one or two things that you can do together. For Dave and me it's stuff like, hiking and bike riding. It is enjoying life together.
3. Keep yourself healthy.
4. Find a balance in the home for taking care of the home. It is not just one person to care for a household especially if two are working.
5. Do you ever let you husband know that you appreciate him for who he is? Appreciate his work and his commitment to do the best he can in the way that he provides for the family.
6. Just as it says: "Train up a child in the way he should go....." There is a training that takes place, consciously or not among parents when they begin to raise children. Each should look at what they 'do best' in the training area and it should be honed: According to psychological researchers, approximately 85 percent of the adult personality is formed by the time a person is six years old. The way in which parents train their children during those critical years together with the influences we expose them to and the environment we place them in, will have a tremendous impact on their character, emotional development, and mental health.
7. "To be sensible" Younger women were to be "sensible," i.e., to place their emotions under the control of the Holy Spirit. They were to be pure in a defiled society.
8. "Pure" The women were to be devoted to one man, their husbands.
9. "Workers at home" Paul says, they were to be "workers at home" or producers of orderliness in the home, (*1 Timothy 5:14*) not necessarily occupied exclusively with household chores. I don't think it is fair to embrace either a "stay-at-home" stereotype for all women or a prohibition of wives from being also professional women from this

verse. The thing that is being affirmed here is that if a woman has a husband and children, then she will love them and not neglect them.

10. "Being subject to their own husbands" Titus should request the older women to admonish the younger women to be kind to their husbands, their children, their servants, parents, in-laws, neighbours and strangers. That is the difference between equality, function and between headship and helpmate. The purpose behind the older women teaching the younger women is "so that the Word of God may not be dishonored."

Application: How should we respond?

1. Husbands, make it easy for your wife to love you.
2. Children, love and respect your mother and don't take advantage of her. You decide what it means to be there for her.
3. Older senior adult women, remember that all of these things were spoken in a context of training. According to Paul's words to Titus, it's the senior adult women who are to come in alongside the younger women and encourage and assist them in their lead in a home where Christ is Lord.
4. Church family, your greatest witness in this community is how families are treated and respected and taught in this body of believers.

Dave Spate

Know that there will be a theme running through all I say this morning. That is that what you do in the present will become your present in the future. We need to hear this because we live in a society where we are told to live in the moment and enjoy the now. Imbedded in that thought is the idea that what we do today is kind of like a chapter in our lives, that once we live it out we leave it behind and it will have no impact on our future. While that sounds great, it is a lie. What you do in the present, will go with you into your future and as it does, it will either enhance that future or compromise what you can do. While the wonder of Christianity is that God can walk with us no matter what has happened, facts are still facts and if you smoke a pack of cigarettes a day, your chances of having lung cancer increases by 50% and if you live the kind of life that God says is right, the chance of having a happy marriage jumps exponentially. So keep in mind as we talk that what you do in the present will become your present in the future. Young women fall into 3 categories, so I will give a word to each this morning...

1. Single Women

(*Titus 2:3*) 'Teach what is good' Our call is to teach that things which will help those precious to us live well. (*Titus 2:5*) 'This is what you need to teach, be self-controlled and pure'. Please know where I am coming from, when I was a youth pastor

somehow the girls in our youth group came up with the idea that if some guy wanted to date them the guy had to first come to me so I could make sure they were ok.

That was not only fun (to mess with these guys heads) and honoring but it set a pattern in my life. That I felt protective, a little fatherly to the ladies of our church. So please take the words I will give with that in mind. As I give these words for the young women, hopefully all of us will find ways that can apply to us as well. Let me give you as single ladies 3 comments that ladies a few years older than you have said they wish they had heard.

What you do today will affect the rest of your life

The reality is that most of life's defining decisions are made in your 20's. I would go so far as to say that who you will be in your 40 - 50's and 70's find it's roots in who you are in your 20's. For it is during your 20's that you will choose the kind of person you will become, the person you will marry, if you will make the faith you grew up with yours, and the career you will pursue. The dangerous thing is that, as we said last week, often that is the very time in our lives when we want to take a sabbatical from faith (when we set our Jesus Jacket, our Christian faith) aside for a while (6 out of 7 university, SAIT students do that) and decide to live in the moment and act as if God doesn't exist for a few years). And live as if what they are doing in their 20's, won't have an impact on their future. Ask yourself these simple questions, 'What kind of life do you want to have? What kind of a person do you want to become? Will how you are living get you there or stop you from getting there? Let me tell you that if we opened up this room for discussion, you would hear the shouts of many who would say 'live right now, for the cost of not doing what is right is too high a price to pay and can result in bringing things forward into your life that you would rather leave behind.

Remember you marry who you date

Not that deep a thought, but I can give you case studies of scads of people who thought 'missionary dating' was a brilliant idea until they found out that our hearts are so easily prone to fall in love. The fact is that if they won't choose faith before you marry, then the chance of them taking faith afterwards goes way down. For you can begin by dating someone for a 'good time' and end up struggling in a marriage that is less than you dreamed about for a long time. Keep your standards high, only date those who are good enough to marry and then act on those dates in a way that you will both be proud of for the rest of your lives.

Become the Person that you would be proud to marry

Let me tell you a story I heard from Andy Stanley 2 weeks ago when I was in Atlanta. He said that in preparation for a sermon much like this one, he got 11 single students and professionals in a room and asked them what he should say as he preached. One of the girls said let me tell you a story, when I hit University I set my Jesus Jacket (my faith aside) and decided to party hardy and I was free sexually etc. Then one night I met this guy, he had it all together, he was everything I had ever wanted, he was a Christian and he had high values. When I came home I sat in the kitchen and with excitement told my mom all about this wonderful guy. Do you know

what my mom said to me? She said ‘why do you think a guy like that, who had lived in such a good way, would want to marry a girl like you?’ “I fell off the chair sobbing on the kitchen floor. And that day I determined that I would be the kind of woman that kind of guy would want to marry.” When I heard that story it took my breath away as well. But it does make a huge point, for most of us have an idea concerning what that person will be like which we want to marry. And yet somehow we have this idea that we can live on a lower level than that and when the time is right that person who has lived so well, worked so hard at doing the right thing will choose us. I will gently say ‘you need to be the person you want that other person to want.’ While the bible doesn’t tell us how to find a spouse, it tells you all kinds of things about how to be the person who is worth pursuing.

Begin to become that Person

If you have lived right, keep living right, keep following after a life that make’s you Jesus proud and will make your future greater. But, what happens if your first thoughts are ‘oh, it’s too late, I have already done _____’. Can I remind you of the wonder of Christianity that Jesus forgives, and He renews our hearts and gives us a new beginning? Decide today that from this day forward, “I will do what is right, so that for myself or for that person God will bring into my life in the future that I can say ‘from that day forward I walked with God and I did what is right and I give that to you as my gift and the evidence of being who I need and want to be’. And can I add that the issue is not just marriage, for some will get married and some will not. The issue is living in such a way that you and God, together, walk in strength and nearness so that He can direct you into the fullness of the future he has for you. Be that to enjoy a marriage or enjoying your singleness and living the fullness of making a profound and joy filled impact with your life. Remember, what you do today matters for tomorrow.

2. Married with No Kids

(*Titus 2:3*) ‘Love your Husbands, be kind’. As you may know Kathy and I were married for 7 years before we had children. During those times we really enjoyed not having kids and we then struggled with not being able to have kids. Here are 2 simple words of advice from our lives and the comments I have heard from other young couples.

Use this time in your life to build your love

I am surprised at how many people build a marriage on a myth that once you meet the right person then everything will be ok. The problem is that when you meet Mr. Right you might find out that he is thinking the very same thing. And then the following scenario plays it’s self out. You begin with great passion, but after a while you find out that Mr. Right may be a little socially handy-capped and some of the chemistry begins to diminish. So you think ‘I know what will fix that, a baby’. And because he is a guy and having a baby requires sex he is all for it. Then the baby arrives and you are so busy with the baby you don’t have much time for each other, because what was missed was that you both need to become the Right person for each other and that

takes time, love, patience and practice. At most weddings I challenge people to not settle for a 'good marriage' but to do what is needed to have a great marriage. As a couple with no kids, pour into each other time, love, experiences, notes, flowers, walks together and so in doing you will build a marriage where you both have great joy in each other.

Don't spend your time wishing for Tomorrow

It is easy when you are young and married to look around at others who have a large house, take bigger vacations or maybe have kids and wish that you had their lives instead of the life you presently have. I know when we couldn't have kids we would look at other families and almost think, if only we just had a couple kids we would be more complete". And while that came from a deep desire to have kids (and some of you may relate while others of you have no desire to have kids, I want to say both are equally right and godly feelings) that we need to reach a place (and it wasn't easy for us) where our joy is not determined by what we have (money or kids) but comes from a knowledge that God is in control of our lives, that the love we have together is precious enough and that we decided that we would enjoy where we are today and what we had been blessed with. So we won't get sucked into living a 'What if life style". We would build our love, enjoy our love and enjoy our lives together. Again, we realized that what we do today matters for tomorrow.

3. Married with Kids

Make times for your Spouse (*Titus 2:3*) "Love you husband and your children". There is a great book entitled 'Is there sex after kids?' Have you noticed that once you have kids your life seems to be constantly on overdrive and you rarely have time for each other, and you never have time for yourself? That survival is an impressive thing. And yet these kids are what you prayed for, yearned for and deeply love. But can I warn you that as wonderful as your kids are, if you don't take time to love each other you will rob each other of the very life giving breath that your heart desires and your life needs. For you were made to be loved.

A former Administrative Assistant once told me that she had been a Great mom and a Lousy wife. She was married to a great guy, but she so loved being a mom and was so overwhelmed with being a mom that she placed her husband on the sidelines for years. By doing that she robbed them both of so much joy and strength. Women love your husband and husbands love your wives.

Choose what your kids do with an Eye to the future

I found this quote the other day, 'Home is where life makes up its mind.' I think that is brilliant, for it is in the home where people are developed and a proper view of life, marriage and self are developed. But here is the problem, all that happens at mock #1 speed. There is soccer, ballet, hockey, homework, Streetwise and you feel like you never get out of your van and life can become a blur in the present so much so that we never look at how today will affect our kids future. If I had the chance to do it all over

again with our kids I would stop more often and ask 'how does what I do fit into who I want my kids to be in 20 years.' If I have to choose between their missing B-true or making the football team, going away for another weekend or being more consistent about being in God's house on Sunday, which will be more important for their future, which will help them be who they need to be 'a people and Christ followers.' If I had to do it all over again I would choose what my kids were involved in with more of an eye toward the future.

Again that leads me to that same idea that what I do today matters for tomorrow. Please know that I offer these words for a humble heart and that I did not cover things from every angle but I believe these things if you do them today will help build a better future for you and those you love.