



by Pastor John Piper

My earnest challenge and prayer for you is . . .

. . . That all of your life—in whatever calling—be devoted to the glory of God.

. . . That the promises of Christ be trusted so fully that peace and joy and strength fill your soul to overflowing.

. . . That this fullness of God overflow in daily acts of love so that people might see your good deeds and give glory to your Father in Heaven.

. . . That you be women of the Book, who love and study and obey the Bible in every area of its teaching; that meditation on biblical truth be the source of hope and faith; that you continue to grow in understanding through all the chapters of your life, never thinking that study and growth are only for others.

. . . That you be women of prayer, so that the Word of God will be opened to you, and so the power of faith and holiness will descend upon you; that your spiritual influence may increase at home and at church and in the world.

. . . That you be women who have a deep grasp of the sovereign grace of God which undergirds all these spiritual processes; and that you be deep thinkers about the doctrines of grace, and even deeper lovers of these things.

. . . That you be totally committed to ministry, whatever your specific calling; that you not fritter away your time on soaps or women's magazines or unimportant hobbies or shopping; that you redeem the time for Christ and his Kingdom.

. . . That, if you are single, you exploit your singleness to the full in devotion to God (the way Jesus and Paul and Mary Slessor and Amy Carmichael did) and not be paralyzed by the desire to be married.

. . . That, if you are married, you creatively and intelligently and sincerely support the leadership of your husband as deeply as obedience to Christ will allow; that you encourage him in his God-

appointed role as head; that you influence him spiritually primarily through your fearless tranquility and holiness and prayer.

... That, if you have children, you accept responsibility with your husband (or alone if necessary) to raise up children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord—children who hope in the triumph of God—sharing with your husband the teaching and discipline they need, and giving them the special attention they crave from you, as well as that special nurturing touch and care that you alone are fitted to give.

... That you not assume that secular employment is a greater challenge or a better use of your life than the countless opportunities of service and witness in the home, the neighborhood, the community, the church, and the world; that you not only pose the question: career or full-time homemaker?, but that you ask just as seriously: full-time career or freedom for ministry? That you ask: Which would be greater for the Kingdom—to work for someone who tells you what to do to make his or her business prosper, or to be God's free agent dreaming your own dream about how your time and your home and your creativity could make God's business prosper? And that in all this you make your choices not on the basis of secular trends or upward lifestyle expectations, but on the basis of what will strengthen the faith of the family and advance the cause of Christ.

... That you step back and (with your husband, if you are married) plan the various forms of your life's ministry in chapters. Chapters are divided by various things—age, strength, singleness, marriage, employment, children at home, children in college, grandchildren, retirement, etc. No chapter has all the joys. Finite life is a series of tradeoffs. Finding God's will, and living for the glory of Christ to the full in every chapter is what makes it a success, not whether it reads like somebody else's chapter or whether it has in it what only another chapter will bring.

... That you develop a wartime mentality and lifestyle; that you never forget that life is short, that billions of people hang in the balance of heaven and hell every day, that the love of money is spiritual suicide, that the goals of upward mobility (nicer clothes, cars, houses, vacations, food, hobbies) are a poor and dangerous substitute for the goals of living for Christ with all your might and maximizing your joy in ministry to people's needs.

... That in all your relationships with men (not just in marriage) you seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit in applying the biblical vision of manhood and womanhood; that you develop a style and demeanor that does justice to the unique role God has given to man to feel responsible for gracious leadership in relation to women—a leadership which involves elements of protection and provision and a pattern of initiative; that you think creatively and with cultural sensitivity (just as he must do) in shaping the style and setting the tone of your interaction with men.

... That you see the biblical guidelines for what is appropriate and inappropriate for men and women not as arbitrary constraints on freedom, but as wise and gracious prescriptions for how to discover the true freedom of God's ideal of complementarity; that you not measure your potential by the few roles withheld, but by the countless roles offered; that you look to the loving God of Scripture and dream about the possibilities of your service to him. (For a detailed list of service ideas, see the pdf titled, [Opportunities for Ministry](#).)