



## Ancient Translations

The only other clues we have regarding the meaning of what it is that the Lord is teaching here come from ancient translations. When translators in the first few centuries after Christ tried to convey the idea into Latin the translator of the Vulgate (400 AD.) used three words *domus curam habentes* (“**having a care of the house**” - Rheims-

Douay Version, from the Vulgate). Another early translation was one done in Syriac (Aramaic). The Syriac version called the Peshitta (400’s AD) connects this thought with the next word in the text “... **discreet, chaste, GOOD HOMEMAKERS, obedient to their own husbands...**” (Lamsa Version from the Peshitta).

## What Can We Know With Certainty?

Several points can be ascertained from this information which can help us define what the Lord is teaching in Titus 2:5:

1. *Women are given the responsibility to manage and watch over affairs of the household.*
2. *This management is to be conducted in subjection and obedience to the husband. “The husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is the head of the church” (Ephesians 5:23) Wives must be “obedient to their own husbands” (Titus 2:5).*
3. *This is a serious responsibility. They are the “watch-dogs” of the family, the “guardians” of the children.*
4. *This job demands industry, activity and hard work. They are “workers at home.”*
5. *Whatever demands may be placed upon her by her circumstances she must not surrender her responsibility as “keeper of the house.”*



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## Welcome Visitors

We are so glad that you joined us today.  
Please come again.

● Let us know if you have any questions.

ISSUE

11.3

BULLETIN OF  
THE OLSEN  
PARK CHURCH  
OF CHRIST

# Faithful Sayings

JANUARY 18  
2009

## Services

Sunday: 9:30 AM  
10:20 AM  
6:00 PM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM



## Elders:

Ken Ford  
Charles Kelley  
Pat Ledbetter

## Deacons:

Dean Bowers  
Eddie Cook  
Bill Davis  
Pat Goguen  
Neil Ledbetter  
Jeff Nunn  
Fred Perez  
Rusty Scott

## Evangelists:

Kyle Pope  
Curtis Carwile

## “Keepers of the Home” by Kyle Pope

**I** do not envy the position in which our world has placed women in this generation. The mother who chooses to stay at home and raise her children is mocked and ridiculed as one with no ambition or talent. Yet, the mother who may be forced to work outside the home is silently scorned as selfish and negligent of her children. Both conclusions are unfair generalizations which may or may not be true.

The Christian wife and mother must wrestle with many difficult choices in our age. They must be obedient to the Word of God. They must nurture, love and mold their children. They must use their abilities unto the glory of God. And they must be prepared to answer the challenges of an ungodly world critical of their choices. What matters in the long run is not what the world thinks about our choices but what the Lord thinks.

The following article is offered as a study tool. It is for the many good Christian women who seek to be obedient to God’s will regardless of the different circumstances in which they may find themselves. My prayer is that the information provided below will assist in understanding what the Lord asks of wives and mothers in this age. In addition I hope that it may provide some resources with which to answer those critical of choices made before Almighty God.

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### Key Passage: Titus 2:5

The Holy Spirit through the pen of the Apostle Paul gave instruction to the preacher Titus to teach the older women to admonish the younger women **“to be discreet, chaste, HOMEMAKERS, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.”** (Titus 2:5 NKJV emphasis mine) This, perhaps more than any other passage in Scripture ad-

resses the issue. If we can understand what the Lord is commanding in this verse we can go a long way towards understanding what the Lord requires of wives and mothers with respect to the home.

Unfortunately, the many English translations which are available today complicate rather than simplify the matter. The New Testament was originally written in Greek. Before the age of the printing press all copies of written material had to be copied by hand. Of the more than 5000 handwritten manuscripts of the Greek New Testament which have survived over the centuries there are minor differences when it comes to spelling or words of similar meaning. What a translator must decide is which manuscripts to look to in their translation.

### “Keepers at Home”

Of the handwritten copies which contain Titus 2:5 the majority of the manuscripts have the word *oikourous* (οἰκουρούς) meaning – “Watching or keeping the house. II. Staying at home, domestic...the mistress of the house” (Liddell & Scott, Abridged 17th ed. pg. 478). The King James and New King James versions look to this word in their translations, rendering it **“keepers at home”** (KJV).

Based on the King James rendering one might draw the conclusion that the point is for the woman to “keep” or “stay” at home. However the emphasis seems to be on the woman’s responsibility to the home. Vincent writes, “The meaning is not *stayers* at home, but *keepers* or *guardians* of the household” (Vol. IV, p. 342). This word is a compound of *oikos* (οἶκος) “house” and *ouros* (οὔρος) “a watcher”.

Scholars tell us that this was a common word in the ancient world. Liddell & Scott say it carried with it the idea of one acting as watch-dog (8th ed. p. 1032). In Athens 400 years

before Christ there stood a pagan temple called the *Erectheum* which housed the figure of a snake. The snake symbolized security and protection of the city of Athens. The playwright Aristophanes calls this “the GUARDIAN (*oikouros*) Serpent” (*Lysistrata* 759, p. 212, 252). Four hundred years after Christ a preacher named Chrysostom used the word to describe a wife’s proper conduct. He wrote, “The woman *who is* KEEPER OF THE HOUSE (*oikouros*) will be of sound mind; the KEEPER OF THE HOUSE (*oikouros*) practices management of the house; *she is* not about luxury, nor unnecessary goings-out, nor will she be occupied with such things of others” (taken from Alford, Vol. III, p. 416).

### “Workers at Home”

Instead of the idea of the wife as “keeper of the house” some manuscripts use the word *oikourgous* (οἰκουρούς) meaning “working at home” (BAG, p. 561). The American Standard and New American Standard look to this word rendering it **“workers at home”** (ASV, NASB). It also is a compound of *oikos* (οἶκος) “house” but with the word *ergon* (ἔργον) “work” added to it rather than “watcher.”

Scholars tell us this word was less common in ancient usage. The only example of *oikourgous* outside of Scripture is that which is found in the medical writings of a Second Century doctor named Soranus of Ephesus. Concerning one having female illnesses he wrote, “Conduct life *as* a HOUSE-WORKER (*oikourgos*) even sitting-still” (taken from Nicoll, Vol. IV, p. 192). The verb form

of this word is found in the writings of the Second Century Christian Clement of Rome. In a probable reference to Paul’s teachings in Titus 2:5 he wrote, “Ye taught them to keep in the rule of obedience, and to MANAGE THE AFFAIRS (*oikourgein*) of their household in seemliness, with all discretion” (*The Apostolic Fathers*, Lightfoot, Vol. II, p. 272).



The Erectheum in Athens