

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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CHANGING ATTITUDES

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I was handed an article recently entitled “*The good wife’s guide*” which appeared in Housekeeping Monthly on May 13, 1955. My eyes had to pause over the picture heading the article of the wife clothed in a wrinkle free dress and high heels greeting her husband with a prepared meal. As I read, I wondered how the wife of 2002 would react to the following suggestions for being the good wife:

- Prepare yourself. Take 15 minutes to rest so you’ll be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair and be freshlooking. He has just been with a lot of work-weary people.

Clear away the clutter. Make one last trip through the main part of the house just before your husband arrives.

Gather up schoolbooks, toys, paper etc. and then run a dustcloth over the tables.

Over the cooler months of the year you should prepare and light a fire for him to unwind by. Your husband will feel he has reached a

haven of rest and order, and it will give you a lift too. After all, catering for his comfort will provide you with immense personal satisfaction.

Prepare the children. Take a few minutes to wash the children’s hands and faces (if they are small), comb their hair and, if necessary, change their clothes. They are little treasures and he would like to see them playing the part. Minimise all noise. At the time of his arrival, eliminate all noise of the washer, dryer and vacuum. Try to encourage the children to be quiet.

Listen to him. You may have a dozen important things to tell him, but the moment of his arrival is not the time. Let him talk first—remember, his topics of conversation are more important than yours.

Arrange his pillow and offer to take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soothing and pleasant voice.

Don’t ask him questions about his actions or question his judgment or integrity. Remember, he is the master of the house and such will always exercise his will with

fairness and truthfulness. You have no right to question him.

A good wife always knows her place.

Are you “good wives” still thinking in these terms today? Do some of these suggestions go beyond amusement to even offend you?

In 1955, it was not appalling to look upon the woman’s place as being centered in the home. The Gospel’s demand of women to “*be workers at home*” and “*being in subjection to your husbands*” (Titus 2:5) was not blasphemy. While such statements of “his topics ...are more important than yours”, or he “will always exercise his will with fairness...you have no right to question him” are not Biblical absolutes; the goal of the article was for the wife to make the home “a place of peace, order and tranquility where your husband can renew himself in body and spirit”.

Inventive ways to achieve this goal were in vogue in 1955. Are they ALL now degrading?