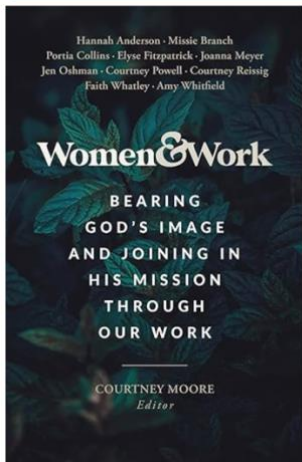


5 Books for Christian Women in the Workforce

Summary Reviews

Summary Reviews by Kim Cordes, Baton Exchange mentor. May 2025



Women & Work - Bearing God's Image and Joining His Mission Through Our Work by Courtney Moore

This book is a compilation with a different person authoring each chapter. Each chapter is a quick, easy read and contains Scripture and a few reflection questions at the end. I found the insights beneficial to work in general, but I didn't feel that it addressed many of the issues Christian women will find in the workplace.

Chapter 1 - The Creation Mandate, Great Commission and Your Work

Work is part of our lives and can be a source of both frustration and joy.

Four Principles of Work

1. work is good - we know this because God is a worker; all work has meaning and purpose in God's Kingdom
2. work is fallen - when the Lord pronounced judgment after Adam and Eve's sin, the place where that judgment fell was primarily in the area of the work they had been given
3. work is redeemed - work has a purpose, to bring glory to God
4. work is eternal

Chapter 2 - Image Bearing and Your Good Works

You are God's creation and have been imprinted by Him, meaning that you have value beyond realization and worth because you exist. As God's image-bearer, we are created to reflect who God is to the world and we carry with us certain attributes of His. We have been created to do good works that God prepared ahead of time for us to do. God has called each of us with a purpose, a work to do.

Chapter 3 - Am I Called?

The word "calling" typically comes with some confusion. Your choices do not cause you to "miss" God's calling as God is sovereign and what He has purposed will come to pass. The call to be a disciple and disciple-maker is the primary calling for a believer, and the only calling that is permanent is the call to follow and obey Christ.

The primary call for every believer is obedience to Christ and growing in His likeness. Every believer also has a call to work in such a way to promote flourishing in the world. Not all work is in the form of paying jobs, but we all have work to do.

Formula for Exercising Wisdom and Discernment

1. desire - is this something I want to do, does it resonate with my passions
2. gifting - do I have the gifts to accomplish this, am I skilled in these areas
3. affirmation - have others affirmed I should move forward with this pursuit
4. opportunity - have I been given an opportunity to do this?

All work is Kingdom work and there is no hierarchy of calling in God's Kingdom.

Chapter 4 - You Are What You Do, or Are You?

Work is a good gift, but it is not the ultimate. God alone is meant to be the center of our lives. We are made by God and for God. Our work was made by God and He gives it to us to steward. As creatures made in God's image, the goal of our work is to know God and to make Him known. Therefore, our lives and our work are not actually about us. Rather than trusting in ourselves, let us trust in the God who made us.

Five Practices to Help Work from Rest

1. offer your weakness as worship - say a brief prayer of confession and worship
2. keep God's Word in front of you - post Scripture verses wherever you will see them
3. identify your triggers and make a boundary
4. engage your community - share your needs and victories

5. look expectantly for God to provide

Chapter 5 - Bodies of Work

The systems of work and structure today don't always know how to honor people embodied as male and female in God's image. This can lead to having to deny the reality of your body (as a woman or a mother) to get ahead in your career.

Scripture connects our bodies to work and describes human work in relationship to the earth from which we were taken. Whatever work God calls us to do will happen in and through our bodies.

Jesus comes into the world to redeem our souls and bodies and to set us free from the curse that hangs over both our work and physical lives. Having a body does not hinder us from doing the work God calls us to, but rather it helps us discern that work, both by what they allow us to do and what they keep us from doing. Our bodies are part of how God reveals our callings in His Kingdom. And caring for our bodies is part of our work.

Not only do our bodies matter to our individual callings but they also matter to the larger work that God is accomplishing in the world. As we give attention to our own bodies, we will be better able to serve Christ's body and those we share it with. For example, as we acknowledge our own physical limits, we will better understand the physical limits and unique needs of our co-laborers, extending to them the compassion that God has shown us.

Learning to honor our bodies as God-given gifts will require countercultural choices, such as limits on commuting or scheduling, deferring professional advancement in a particular season and resisting the pressure to work overtime so your body can rest / sabbath.

Chapter 6 - Don't Waste Your Gifts

Stewardship begins with God as He is the creator and owner of all things. Being stewards of God's creation has always been a part of God's initial design for our work as He created us to bring glory to Himself through our stewardship of the earth.

God gives each of us diverse skills and abilities that He fully expects us to use. We can never allow fear to be an excuse for poor stewardship.

God has called us to work and has entrusted us with a specific vocational assignment to carry out. God also commissions us to share the gospel faithfully.

Three Evidences of Good Stewardship

1. humility
2. bearing fruit
3. faithfulness

All work is Kingdom work.

Chapter 7 - Motherhood and the Mission of God

The foundational principle for us as Christians is that God created us to work just as He is a worker. Yet, often the tasks we do everyday often feel futile (i.e., doing laundry to have the hamper full the next day). And working moms often feel pulled in multiple directions. The tension between motherhood and work exists due to cultural changes, not Biblical ones. The desire to work outside the home does not mean you don't love your children or that you want to neglect your calling as a mother any more than the desire to stay home means you don't care about exploring and stewarding your gifts.

The Bible doesn't give us a step-by-step road map for making these choices (i.e., to work outside the home), but rather God's Word leads us on the path of wisdom. As a result, it is a matter of conscience based on wisdom in determining what is best for our family.

Three Wisdom Principles

1. God has called us to walk in freedom - knowing that our standing before God is not dependent on what we do but on what Christ has already done
2. keep a long-term perspective on your work and seasons of life - hard days or seasons aren't necessarily an indication that we made a wrong choice
3. our desire for motherhood is a good desire and it is not in competition with our desire to work outside the home

Walking in wisdom looks like asking if we are being faithful to the Lord moment by moment, knowing that each day looks different from the day before.

Chapter 8 - The Grief and Grace of an Unexpected Career

There can be tension between various roles in life and grief comes in diverse forms. Disappointment tied to your work or relational roles can gnaw at your soul.

When we experience grief in our professional or relational roles:

1. accept the Lord's process and timing - don't rush the process
2. fight the urge to keep up appearances - learn to lament
3. protect your heart - be selective about who you confide in

After emerging from the season of grief, embrace the work God has given you to do as God cares about that aspect of our lives too. Christ understands the unique challenges in your workplace because He worked too.

3 Perspectives and Practices to Turn Daily Work into a Tool for Spiritual Growth

1. recognize His presence - envision Christ walking through every moment with you
2. pray as you go - set aside prayer times during the day and / or try prayerful breathing techniques
3. accept Christ's yoke - when Christ invites us to pair up with Him, He will carry the load

Chapter 9 - Healthy Relationships Between Men and Women in the Workplace

God's design from the beginning was for men and women to work together to accomplish His purposes on the earth. While men and women were equally important to God in value, dignity and worth, they were purposely created differently and with distinct roles that reflect particular truths about God.

5 Keys for Healthy Relationships for Men and Women in the Workplace

1. pray for each other
2. show mutual respect
3. set boundaries wisely
4. lean into difficult situations
5. give the benefit of the doubt - believe the best in them

Chapter 10 - Developing and Growing Your Gifts

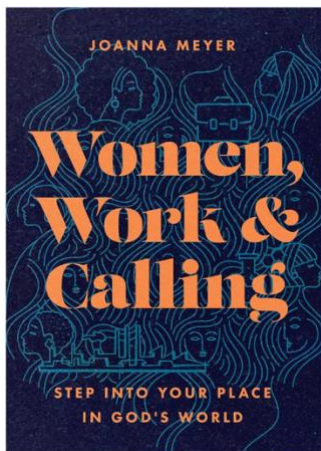
Development is part of what it means to be human. We weren't meant to be stagnant, but rather to grow and move forward. Our ultimate goal as individuals is to be like Jesus and our ultimate goal as the church is to join in His mission to make disciples, taking the gospel to the ends of the earth.

When we grow as Christian women, we also grow as leaders and disciple-makers through the gifts the Lord has given us and the tasks that He has called us to. Development comes when we show up and let the Lord shape us into who He has called us to be.

Before personal or career development, spiritual development must take priority. We must pursue transformation and personal maturity, which comes from the Word of God and connection to Him.

Knowing how God has created you and wired your interests, talents and loves can help you grow into the good works you have been called to.

1. know yourself - understand your strengths and weaknesses, struggles and insecurities, talents and loves
2. take initiative - pursue development opportunities through reading, listening to others, staying current, etc., in whatever season of life you are in



Women, Work & Calling by Joanna Meyer

This is a very quick read with very short (but many) chapters - typically just a few pages each. Each chapter begins with Scripture or a quote from a Christian leader and ends with a short reflection. The book does address Christian women working outside the home, but the shortness of each chapter limits the depth into which each chapter delves. I think this book is good for quick hits / insights on topics relevant to Christian women working outside the home.

Part I - Ignite Your Vocational Imagination

Chapter 1 - Called Together

Women are vital players in God's redemptive purposes. When women hold back, when they neglect their God given gifts and responsibilities, a critical piece of God's design is missing, aspects

of God's character will be hidden from the world and the partnership between men and women is weakened. Men cannot be defined simply as what women are not, and women cannot be defined simply as what men are not. As the Bible sees it, no kind of human community can thrive without men and women working together.

Chapter 2 - A Gospel as Big as the World

Any man or woman whose life has been touched by the gospel has a role to play in God's redemptive plan. Through our daily work, in whatever form it takes, we have been entrusted with a corner of creation that awaits God's loving influence. Our work, therefore, becomes a response to God's love and sacrifice, offered in service to others.

A broad view of the gospel affirms a wide range of roles and invites us to see ourselves as stewards of our talents across various life stages. We must develop vocational imagination, the ability to adapt and envision new ways for God to work through our vocation as circumstances change.

Chapter 3 - Cultural Norms Versus Biblical Norms

Factors shaping women's thinking about work are diverse, formed by our family, ethnic background, personality, drive, relationship status and church background. Therefore it is critical to explore the various influences that shaped our understanding of what it means to be a Christian woman.

The varied experiences remind us that to be biblical, our vision for women's roles must be accessible to any woman, in any stage of life or socioeconomic status, anywhere in the world, at any point in history. To imply that a single model represents a biblical ideal denies the diversity of the human experience and the diverse roles women play in Scripture.

Chapter 4 - What it Means to be Called

Vocation is one's entire life lived in response to God's voice, God's call. Our call touches every facet of life and is discerned through an active relationship with God.

Calling is more general than it is specific. Before God ever calls us to a specific role or relationship, He calls us to Himself - to a relationship with him, to a life of discipleship and to serve others. The key answer to the call is to be devoted to no one and to nothing above God Himself.

Calling is usually formed rather than found. Our call takes shape over time as God leads us through circumstances that strengthen and form our character.

Calling is not something that we passively wait to figure out, but is an invitation to take steps forward as we trust, look and see.

Chapter 5 - Tools to Explore Your Calling

We live in a world addicted to choice, so the question is how do we respond to the many choices life offers?

Three practices to help discern God's direction

1. plot your journey - reflect on various stages of your educational or working life and note moments of flare and focus
2. keep a "next" list - compile a list of opportunities you'd like to pursue in the future
3. find a friend whose personal or professional journey resonates with yours - talk and dream about your professional growth with someone who understands the complexities of your life and is invested in your success.

Living your call does not depend on God declaring a single glorious vision for your life. Rather it is a lifelong journey that combines spiritual discernment, courage and creativity as God helps you become the woman He designed you to be.

Part 2 - Build Strength from Within

Chapter 6 - Identify Beliefs that Limit Your Growth

Limiting beliefs are judgments about yourself or your abilities that keep you from working toward a goal. They develop from direct and indirect influences, whispering words of doubt or fear.

Limiting beliefs can change if you understand their source and counter these false messages with Biblical truth. Practices to overcome limiting beliefs include:

1. journal to increase your self-awareness
2. develop a Biblically based identity statement
3. anticipate that limiting beliefs will appear as you work

4. invite God into the process

Chapter 7 - God Grows Your Soul Through Work

Daily work plays a critical role in your spiritual growth. As the pressure is on in your job, it will force you to experience God in new ways. Work reveals:

1. the condition of your heart (motives, insecurities, temptations, areas of discontent)
2. areas for growth (reveal sin in your life or ways in which you don't trust God)
3. your need for God (discover attachments other than God)

Soul care, practices that focus on building a life deeply connected to God, are important. Soul care is about connecting with God's presence as He is with you and for you as you go about your work, rooted in God's strength.

Chapter 8 - Cultivate Humble Confidence

Humility is not insecurity, indecisiveness or passivity. Biblical humility is about living in agreement with what God says about you and is at peace with who God has made you to be. Humble confidence comes from knowing what is true of you - you are made in the image of God and He has given you specific strengths for the roles He intends you to fill.

Chapter 9 - Overcome Imposter Syndrome

Imposter syndrome is self-doubt, despite having academic or professional achievements, that causes one to believe that they are really not qualified for the task, position, award, etc. and they have fooled anyone who thinks otherwise.

When imposter syndrome creeps up, remember these points.

1. it's ok to make a mistake, but keep going
2. ask for help as you pursue new skills
3. avoid leading with an apology or diminishing your ideas
4. let yourself stand out
5. surround yourself with people who can affirm the gifts and abilities they see in you

Chapter 10 - Discover God's Gift of Rest

Through sabbath, soul-nourishing rest exists as a complement to good, God-given work, rather than as an escape from it. Setting time away from work each week encourages us to shift our focus away from our toil to enjoy God and appreciate the fruits of our labor.

To welcome the gift of sabbath rest we must first wrestle with the outsized influence work has on our lives. Anyone who cannot rest from work is a slave - to the need for success, to materialism, to the expectations of others or to our employer's demands. Choosing to step away from work is an act of trust in God's provision.

Practical Ways to Plan a Time of Rest

1. make time for worship
2. pursue delight
3. unplug from technology
4. recognize that various stages of life practice sabbath differently
5. prepare for your sabbath

Part 3 - Navigate Common Workplace Challenges

Chapter 11 - Lead with Authenticity and Intentionality

Authenticity builds trust. To be authentic, (1) remember God's design (who made you and how you are made), (2) focus your energy on knowing who you are, what is important and what is of value, (3) wear your own dreams and (4) prepare to speak up.

Chapter 12 - Realize Your Vocation Power

Your daily work is one of the most profound ways you can serve using God's power for His glory and others' good.

Seven Forms of Vocational Power that Can be Used for God's Purposes

1. knowledge / expertise
2. platform
3. networks
4. position

5. influence
6. skills
7. reputation

Chapter 13 - Resist the Need to be Perfect

Perfectionism can keep you from thriving at work and living in the freedom and peace God offers.

The Costs of Perfectionism

1. burnout
2. hinders collaboration
3. keeps you from loving your neighbor

Finding Relief from Perfectionism

1. recognizing perfectionism is a lie - rooted in the belief that we can earn love or work our way toward being accepted
2. remind yourself that perfect is often the enemy of the good - it is pride-based or fear-based compulsion that can paralyze and cause neglect of what is necessary and good
3. soak you life in Scripture that reminds you of God's perfection and love for you

Chapter 14 - Lead Up

The idea of leading from the middle is called "leading up". Your input matters because you may see details or perspectives your leader may not be able to see.

Tips for Respectfully Sharing Your Perspective

1. make sure your heart is in the right place
2. consider your timing and tone
3. consider the communication method that best suits the suggestion
4. be solution oriented
5. seek to understand others' jobs

Chapter 15 - Be Aware of the Double Bind

The disconnect between perceived and actual leadership effectiveness is referred to as the "double bind", a subtle but powerful dynamic that suggests women can be regarded as competent or likable, but not both.

When caught in a double bind, (1) reflect on the example set by Christ who was able to hold seemingly conflicting characteristics in tension as He loved others and accomplished God's purposes, (2) examine how your personality and gifts show up at work, (3) look for opportunities to work against your type and present a more well-rounded version of yourself and (4) make sure your accomplishments are measurable and visible.

Part 4 - Pursue Purposeful Relationships

Chapter 16 - Re-envision Mentorship

Top Questions Regarding Purpose and Process of Mentoring

1. what is mentoring - a brain to pick, an ear to listen and a push in the right direction
2. what should you look for in a mentor - gather multiple individuals who support you for various purposes and seasons of life
3. what's the role of the mentee - active participants in the learning process; look at Christ's example of being a learner and disciple, He developed and He placed Himself in a humble position to learn and grow
4. what about men and women mentoring each other - comes with both benefits and complications

Chapter 17 - Network in New Ways

A weaker network may mean a lack of access to job opportunities as close to 85% of jobs are filled by networking.

Principles to Shape a New Approach to Networking

1. start your day by praying for your relationships - anticipate the connections you may make while considering the eternal significance of such connections
2. become softer (not hardened) - especially when excluded from a group
3. encourage mutually beneficial relationships
4. stop the comparison cycle - a culture of comparison can poison our relational networks

Chapter 18 - Become a Relationally Generous Woman

Make room in your relational networks for more women to contribute by (1) calling attention to other women's accomplishments, (2) amplify others' voices, (3) open your relational circles and (4) share your power and resources.

Chapter 19 - Restore the Blessed Alliance

God, in His grand design for the world, made men and women to work together (the "blessed alliance"). Redeeming male / female partnership starts with awareness and attitude. Look for conversation partners to explore this with you and pray for the Lord to heal and renew your perspective.

Chapter 20 - Don't Lean in, Lean Hard

Lean hard on the Lord.



Christian Women on the Job - Excelling at Work Without Compromising Your Faith by David Goetsch and Karen Moore

I found this book very easy to read and quite relevant to women in the workforce. Each chapter addresses an issue / obstacle that a Christian woman is likely to face in the workforce, and each chapter ends with a prayer, group discussion questions and review questions for individuals and groups.

Chapter Topics

1. Excelling in Spite of the Unique Obstacles

Christian women in the workplace can face unique obstacles, but in the long run, your Christian principles, more than anything else, will propel you up the career ladder, provided you apply them consistently and wisely. A Christian woman in the workplace should expect to be different from her co-workers as the values taught in Scripture and the values taught in contemporary society are divergent. Instead of focusing on the differentness, embrace how being a Christian makes you different and be glad. Being different in Christ will protect you from the pitfalls for greed, lust, self-centeredness, envy, jealousy, anger, thirst for power, status-seeking, ego, misguided ambition and

other moral failings. Being different in Christ makes you the type of individual employers want in today's hyper-competitive workplace.

2. Coping with Opposition to Working Outside the Home

Opposition for women working outside of the home often comes from within the Christian community. Knowing what Scripture says on this issue will help overcome this obstacle. First of all, the Bible does not prohibit women from working outside the home. The Bible provides guidance concerning what is expected of you as a wife and mother, but it does not tell you how to go about meeting those expectations. Many who oppose women working outside the home focus on the part of Titus 2 that deals with working in the home and take it as women should work exclusively in the home. However, I (the author) have never met a Christian woman who worked outside the home who did not also work in the home. Additionally, some will refer to I Timothy 5:14 to support the claim that managing the household is the only career a woman should pursue. This verse is hardly a proscription against women working outside the home, but rather is an expectation that unmarried women will marry, and having done so, will manage their households efficiently and effectively. The real issue is not whether a woman works solely in the home or also outside the home, but whether, in either case, she manages her household well.

The Bible also provides examples of women who work outside the home, such as the Proverbs 31 women, Deborah and Lydia.

The key to ensuring the household is running efficiently and effectively is to apply the four pillars of good household management:

1. planning - list of what must be done
2. organizing - determining who will do what when
3. leading - inspiring others to do their best in helping achieve a common goal
4. controlling.- establishing the household rules and enforcing them

Choosing to work outside the home to honor God by putting to good use the talents, education and skills He gave you is a good reason.

3. Balancing Faith, Family and Work

Finding a healthy balance in your faith, family and work can be a struggle. Faith is the foundation of everything else in your life and if your faith life is suffering from neglect, your family and work lives are probably suffering too.

Challenges to balancing these three areas of life include:

1. technology that allows connection to work at all times
2. taking on unnecessary outside activities
3. work can seem more demanding and less forgiving than God or family

The first step in getting your life in balance is to get your faith in order. When you put God first in your life, your other priorities will fall into place more easily. Action steps for putting God first include:

1. making a commitment to put God first
2. do everything for the glory of God
3. put your trust in God
4. pray without ceasing
5. read the Bible regularly

Practical strategies for achieving balance in your life.

1. understand most things take longer to complete than you think they will
2. turn wasted time into Bible and prayer time
3. accept that taking more time to climb the career ladder is sometimes the wise choice
4. turn off the television, smartphones, computers and other electronic devices
5. teach our children to do household chores
6. maintain a work, family and faith calendar
7. reserve evenings and weekends for family and faith activities
8. prepare for mornings the night before and enlist your family's help
9. do not take on unnecessary outside activities
10. accept that you don't have to do everything
11. accept that more is not always better

4. Shining Your Light in Spite of Rejection and Opposition

If you experience opposition to your faith, remember you are not the first Christian, nor will you be the last, to have this experience. Hiding or downplaying your faith are both mistakes as that is what Satan wants you to do. The best way to demonstrate the lessons of Scripture during work hours is to demonstrate them. Reflect the image of Christ in how you do your work, treat customers, interact with coworkers, make decisions, solve problems and persevere in times of adversity. A Christ-like example is an appropriate response in any setting and there is no better example than one reflecting the image of Christ. Part of being a visible Christian is maintaining a positive attitude, which requires willpower and work. As Christians, our attitudes should lift others and give them hope.

When you give into negativity, try the following strategies to get your attitude back on track.

1. help someone else whose attitude is slumping
2. focus on the good in others, not the bad
3. be thankful you have a job - some people don't

5. Coping with Temptation and Adversity in Ways that Honor God

Everyone at work faces problems, trials, challenges and dilemmas, but a Christian woman also faces the difficulty of trying to cope with adversity in ways that reflect the image of Christ. When adversity strikes, let it bring you closer to God. You face temptation challenging your faith everyday in the workplace and standing up to temptation is essential if you are going to maintain your faith while working among people who reject it. Temptation is ever present in your life. But until you stop fighting it, give in and submit to its seductive power, you have not sinned. Said another way, temptation is not sin, but giving into it is.

When you feel tempted by peer pressure, step away from the situation long enough to pray and consult Scripture. Place your cares at God's feet and put your trust in Him. He will sustain you.

Strategies to resist temptation

1. learn by observing others - learn from the mistakes of others as well as their successes
2. read Scripture until the temptation passes
3. bolster your resolve against temptation with prayer
4. enlist the help of Christ and fellow believers in fighting temptation

Not all forms of adversity in the workplace relate directly to our Christian faith, but the way we respond to them does. How you handle adversity matters. As a Christian woman, you can expect

adversity to be part of your work life. Be vigilant and prepared for the workplace storms certain to come. And when adversity comes, run to Christ. God wants to strengthen you to face future adversity and therefore allows trials to come our way, but He doesn't allow more than we can handle.

Strategies:

1. expect the unexpected and be prepared
2. remember God has a purpose for your suffering
3. use adversity to bring you closer to God
4. remember that you are not alone in your adversity
5. understand that perseverance is rewarded in God's time
6. refuse to let adversity overwhelm you
7. look beyond the present darkness to a brighter future
8. study the examples of Christian women who were martyred for their faith
9. reach out to someone else who is suffering

6. Applying God's Gift of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is a gift from God and has several different components, including the ability to perceive, interpret and manage your own emotions and the ability to perceive, interpret and wisely respond to the emotions of others. Applying emotional intelligence involves paying attention to your emotions as well as those of others, and then responding in positive, productive and helpful ways. Applying your emotional intelligence can result in:

1. better decision making
2. better conflict management
3. better communication
4. better crisis management
5. better stress reduction
6. better relationships at work
7. better feedback to subordinates and coworkers
8. better meeting management

Improving your emotional intelligence begins when you decide to be intentional about exerting self control over your own emotions while being kind and patient with the emotions of others. You will never realize the full benefit of your emotional intelligence until you develop the humility to accept that it is not all about you.

Strategies for improving your emotional intelligence and applying it more effectively:

1. put aside technology and connect with people face-to-face
2. reflect and analyze in the aftermath of emotionally charged events
3. practice exercising self-restraint
4. practice responding impersonally to rude or inconsiderate comments
5. practice listening and thinking before making decisions
6. practice listening to nonverbal cues
7. practice controlling your temper

7. Leading Men (and Women) in the Workplace

There is no Biblical prohibition against women leading men at work.

The kind of leadership that men and women in the workplace respond to best is servant leadership, which is an approach to leading people based on Christ's example. To lead people, you must first earn their trust and respect. As a Christian woman, be prepared to face resentment when you become a supervisor or manager as some men will chafe at working for a woman and some women may be jealous of your success.

Servant leaders and Christians are expected to care for their employees. Think of Christ and how He led His apostles and other followers. He loved them and cared about them, but He never hesitated to correct them when necessary.

Servant leadership is Christ-like leadership. We are to avoid selfishness and conceit, be humble and regard serving others as more important than serving ourselves. Traits of servant leaders include the following.

1. trustworthiness (honesty and integrity)
2. vision / sense of purpose

3. listening
4. compassion / caring / consideration / empathy
5. credibility / influence
6. commitment
7. self sacrifice
8. fairness
9. courage
10. perseverance
11. positive attitude (ability to give others a sense of hope)
12. patience
13. stewardship
14. initiative

8. Coping with Crude Language, Inappropriate Behavior and Bullies

Inappropriate behavior is not uncommon in the workplace and any Christian woman working outside the home will be confronted with behavior at odds with her faith. You will not excel in your career until you know how to deal with inappropriate behavior.

When dealing with profanity at work, set an example of never using profanity yourself and walk away when others use it, quietly confront it in private and take your complaint to the next higher level of authority if there is no change.

When dealing with rude, inconsiderate or thoughtless behavior, set a consistent example of good manners in all situations, confront the rude person in private and recommend management provide business etiquette training.

When dealing with sexual harassment, understand what sexual harassment is, understand sexual harassment is a violation of God's law, talk to first-time offenders and demand they stop their inappropriate behavior, make the situation known to management and file a formal complaint with the EEOC.

When dealing with bullies, understand why bullies need to intimidate others, confront the bully and describe exactly what he / she does that you find offensive and document every instance of bullying.

9. Staying Calm, Focused and Positive When Work is Stressful

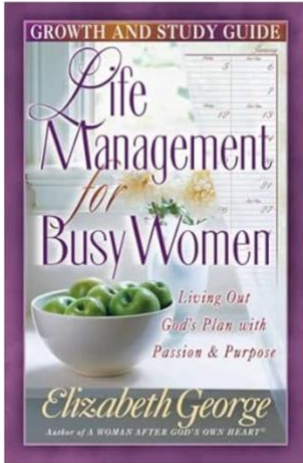
What is unique to Christian women in difficult workplace situations is not the stress, but God's expectations of how you deal with it. Not only do you need to cope with stress in ways that protect your physical and emotional well-being, you need to do it in ways that conform to the teachings of Scripture, by setting a positive and helpful example for others. To do this, you need to be able to do four things.

1. cope with stress in the moment, as it occurs - through silent prayer, through Scripture reading, venting to a fellow believer
2. relieve stress after the fact so you don't let it build up - physical activities, relaxation activities,
3. adjust your attitude toward the things causing stress in your life - accept life isn't always fair, but don't use it as an excuse, don't create emergencies in your own mind, choose your battles with care and purpose, choose one thing from your to-do list and do it, get comfortable with change - be flexible and adaptable, clear your mind several times a day, don't be so serious - laugh a little, don't borrow other people's problems, understand the work is never done, don't be surprised with plans go awry
4. stay calm and focused in the midst of crisis situations - remember the outcome is in God's hands, close your eyes, take a few deep breaths and pray, be deliberate and intentional but not hectic, focus on solutions, not problems, give people something to do, no matter how small or inconsequential, remove panicking, out-of-control coworkers from the scene.

10. Coping with Insecurity and Doubt From Being Different

The kind of insecurity dealt with in this chapter consists of feelings of inadequacy and inferiority based on the rejection or disapproval of coworkers, or just unflattering comparisons you make to your coworkers. Self-confidence is an inherently weak foundation on which to build a sense of security. When the source of your security is self, meaning such things as talent, appearance, rank, financial assets, and health, your security will last only as long as these assets last.

The key to permanently overcoming self-doubt is to stop looking for security in the wrong places and start looking in the only place it really exists - Christ. The take-away from this chapter is that you are a child of God and this fact makes you infinitely valuable.



Life Management for Busy Women by Elizabeth George

This book was easy to read and included Scripture references, vignettes to illustrate points, and a study guide for each chapter at the end of the book. The focus is on managing many different areas of life, but it does not touch on issues specific to women in the workforce. I think this is a good general devotional for women, but is not one geared toward working women or the issues women will face in the workplace.

Part I - At the Heart of it All - Managing Your Spiritual Life

Chapter 1 - You and God's Word

Even with our multitude of responsibilities, we must be women who wait on the Lord. We must learn to look to Him each new morning and realize that life management is really spiritual life management.

Three steps to help you tend to first things first, no matter how busy you are.

1. Spend time looking to the Lord through His Word
2. Aim to give the first minutes of each day to reading the Bible
3. Seek communion with God early in the morning and earnestly in the day

Read God's Word to know God's thoughts, hear His heart and to have a little of the heavenly be a part of your everyday life. Reading God's Word is never a waste of time as it teaches you, reproves you, corrects, mends and instructs you, equips you, guides you and cheers you.

Chapter 2 - Developing a Passion for God's Word

Discipline is called for in developing a passion for God's Word.

Tips and Practices:

1. refuse to miss a day

2. pray when you come to God's Word - ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Word of God to your soul and your spirit
3. take in God's Word in a variety of ways - read the Bible, listen to teaching audios and videos, memorize and meditate on specific Bible verses, sing hymns
4. find a rhythm or a pattern that fits your lifestyle
5. be a woman of one book - The Book - read what honors God's standards and glorifies Him and if you can only read one book, make sure it is the Bible
6. be accountable - declare your intentions to those who care for you most and are willing to check up on you and hold your feet to the fire
7. beat the family - aim to arise before your family does and take time to tune your heart strings to heaven
8. teach your children
9. purpose to get up - set an alarm
10. aim for more time - something is better than nothing and always aim for more time

Chapter 3 - Developing a Passion for Prayer

Prayer is a responsibility and a duty because of the many teachings in Scripture that call us to a life of faithful prayer.

Truths about Prayer

1. prayer is a privilege
2. prayer grows your trust in God
3. prayer guides you in the path of righteousness
4. prayer assists your relationship with God
5. prayer strengthens you against your tendency to sin

How to pray

1. pray regularly
2. pray respectfully
3. pray humbly
4. pray boldly
5. pray broadly

Spiritual disciplines of prayer

1. make a commitment to pray
2. realize prayer is not optional
3. refuse to miss a day
4. study the prayers of the Bible
5. study the prayers of Christians through the ages

Part II - Taking Care of God's Temple - Managing Your Physical Life

Chapter 4 - You and Your Body

Dwight L. Moody stated that the secret to discipline is motivation - that when a person is sufficiently motivated, discipline will take care of itself.

The physical body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. Guidelines for caring for God's temple and your body.

1. guard yourself - guard all you do, see, hear, think, eat and choose
2. walk in righteousness - avoid all temptations to even and unrighteousness
3. avoid sexual sin

Our body is not our own, but rather God owns our body and God's Word provides house rules for our body.

1. flee sexual immorality
2. flee youthful lusts
3. do not love the world
4. do not love the things in the world
5. abstain from fleshly lusts
6. abstain from every form of evil

Jesus purchased our bodies at a tremendous cost - his blood. Our chief aim in life is to honor God and we are called to honor God in our body.

Chapter 5 - Managing Your Body Part I

Managing your life for God is spiritual work and a stewardship. Because your life includes a physical body, your body must be managed, which means the body's management falls into the spiritual realm and prayer helps. Prayer is a mighty spiritual weapon you can wield to manage your life so God is glorified.

By dealing with sin, we gain a greater measure of the physical vitality and health that fuels the life and the plan God has in mind for each of us.

By walking in the Spirit we will not succumb to the lusts of the flesh.

To gain mastery over our own body, we need to be temperate, learning to live in moderation, having God's self control over everything.

Chapter 6 - Managing Your Body Part II

Disciplines that will help you manage your busy life and days.

1. seek proper sleep and rest
2. watch what you eat
3. keep a schedule
4. take care of your appearance
5. commit to a lifelong pursuit of discipline

Part III - Creating a Heaven on Earth - Managing Your Home Life

Chapter 7 - You and Your Marriage

Growing a Christian marriage and nurturing a lifelong friendship and building a permanent relationship takes hard work, commitment, determination, time, sacrifice and daily management. Next to your relationship with God, your marriage is most urgent.

God's Four Words for Wives

1. help your husband
2. follow your husband's leadership
3. respect your husband

4. love your husband

Keys to a meaningful marriage

1. center your life on the Lord - concern yourself with making sure you are a Godly wife
2. pray for your husband
3. know your roles (God's four words for wives)
4. study your mate - what are his likes, dislikes, be aware of his moods, his timetable, his work schedule, his energy cycles
5. be a servant - think not of yourself but of your mate
6. follow your husband's leadership
7. make sure your husband is #1
8. talk things over
9. pay attention to a few don'ts - don't be contentious, nagging, don't embarrass your husband by your speech, appearance, behavior or neglect of family or home
10. make each day fun

Chapter 8 - You and Your Children

The Bible provides guidelines, real principles for parents to follow.

God's Guidelines for Moms

1. teach your children about God and His ways
2. train your children - teach them God's Word
3. love your children
4. prize (treasure) your children

Keys for Effective Mothering

1. center your life on the Lord
2. model true Godly character
3. pray for your children
4. be there
5. take your children to church

6. choose your children above all other people and pursuits
7. discipline your children
8. be your children's #1 encourager
9. nurture your marriage
10. make each day fun

Chapter 9 - You and Your Home

The Bible is filled with information on the home and instructions for maintaining it.

God's Guidelines for Homemaking

1. build your home
2. watch over your home
3. manage your home
4. love your home

Disciplines for Home Management

It is not the kind of place or the size of the place you call home, but the tone and the atmosphere of that place.

1. be dedicated to your home
2. be a woman of prayer
3. be aware of the basics
4. be the queen of the schedule
5. be organized
6. be there
7. be the best
8. be reading - learn skills, methods and tools that make for better homemaking
9. be frugal
10. be creative

Part IV - Take Care of Business - Managing Your Financial Life

Chapter 10 - You and Your Money

Knowing and following God's guidelines for finance will definitely help you faithfully manage your money.

God's Guidelines for Finance

1. you are a steward - any money we have is not ours, it's God's
2. your God will provide for all your needs - the Bible explains that we should be content if we have the two basics of food and clothing
3. you are called to contentment - it is learned, required when you have much and when you have little and is not based on your present circumstances

Chapter 11 - Managing Your Money

Disciplines for Managing Your Money

1. owe no one anything - cease unnecessary spending, pray instead of spending, maximize short-term strategies
2. don't spend more than you make
3. don't buy on credit - mortgage is ok as it is considered an investment / asset; using a credit card is ok if the balance is paid off every month
4. don't envy what others have
5. don't love money
6. give regularly to your church
7. give generously
8. be aware of your financial condition at all times
9. keep a reserve
10. practice self-control

Part V - Being a Friend - Managing Your Social Life

Chapter 12 - You and Your Friendships

We are social beings and our need for companionship and fellowship stems from the creation of man. God has not only given us His commandments for our friendships and relationships, but He's also given us guidelines.

Guidelines for Friendships with Family - order of concern

1. marriage partner
2. children
3. parents and siblings

Guidelines for Friendships Within the Family of God

1. love for the Lord
2. love for one another

Guidelines for Friendships Outside the Church

1. Christ is seen through your love
2. the seed of the gospel is sown and watered
3. the soul is touched with the goodness of God

Chapter 13 - Managing Your Friendships

Friendships are a part of God's plan for growth, encouragement, stimulation, learning and love, along with witnessing and evangelism.

Qualities and Actions that Create Friendships

1. be loyal
2. do not keep score
3. be respectful and sensitive
4. be honest and attentive
5. give something away in every encounter - three ministries = (1) friendliness, (2) encouragement and (3) witnessing
6. be an encourager
7. prioritize your friendships - be sure people are not eating away your time and be sure you are reaching out and ministering to others
8. nurture your friendships
9. pray for your friends

Part VI - Minding Your Mind - Managing Your Mental Life

Chapter 14 - You and Your Mind

This chapter is about our thought life, what we choose to think about, what we choose to put into our minds and how we choose to use our brains.

Guidelines for Mastering and Managing Mental Life

1. what to think and not think - whatever is true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praiseworthy
2. shaping your thoughts - they should reach upward, be disciplined
3. certain mental activities will help determine what to do and not do with our time - problem solving, decision making, planning, organizing, scheduling

Chapter 15 - Managing Your Mind

Management takes place in the mind and being a straw boss (a person who has subordinate authority) requires massive mental energy and activity.

Guidelines on Fulfilling Our Roles as Managers of Life

1. be reading your Bible
2. be memorizing
3. be developing - start where you are and develop your mental capacity by setting goals, reading, developing your professional skills
4. be preparing
5. be sharing - we retain 10% of what we hear, 40% of what we write down, 60% of what we commit to memory and close to 100% of what we teach
6. be challenged
7. be varied - use many different avenues to stimulate your thinking and expand your horizons
8. be continuing
9. be reviewing - faithful and regular review burns truths and information into our minds
10. be selective

Part VII - Serving the Lord - Managing Your Ministry

Chapter 16 - You and Your Ministry

God has gifted each one of us differently and has called us to use those gifts to serve the body of Christ. Three gifts, serving, giving and showing mercy, are commanded of us all.

Keys to Discovering Our Spiritual Gifts

1. your service will bring you joy - joy is a strong indicator of giftedness
2. your service will bear fruit - others are blessed and so are you
3. your service will be affirmed by others
4. your service will create opportunities for repeat service

Chapter 17 - Managing Your Ministry

Serving God and serving others is another area of life that needs management and preparation. Then, if an opportunity comes your way, you will be more ready to respond positively even in the midst of a busy life.

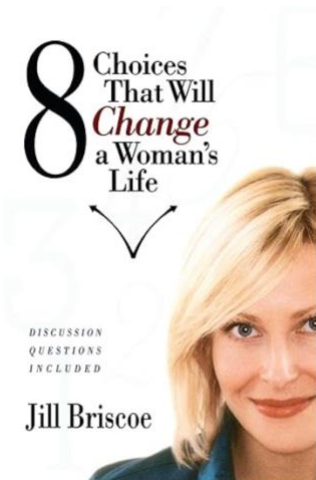
Once you discover your areas of giftedness, you can begin to develop them. Purposefully develop your gifts, faithfully read your Bible, look for references to your gifts and look for the people who used that gift in the Bible. Then pray for ministry opportunities, accept the challenge to grow, allow yourself to be stretched and support others in ministry. But don't neglect your family for ministry.

Part VIII - Managing Your Time and Your Life

Chapter 18 - Managing Your Time and Your Life

Once we know God's will and move out to do it, the management of our time will come much easier because we know the direction God wants us to go. Next, we need to redeem the time. We redeem time when we use our time on earth to fulfill God's will, when you make the most of your time, when you ask God for His wisdom regarding how you can reclaim, recover, retrieve, rescue and regain the time of your life for doing His will, when you realize that you cannot actually manage time.

Make a habit of weighing and evaluating your management, use and results of the day, trying to uncover the time bandits and robbers. And once they are identified, guard against them



8 Choices That Will Change a Woman's Life by Jill Briscoe

This book was easy to read and included Scripture references, vignettes to illustrate points, and a study guide for each chapter (personal reflection / discussion, prayer). The focus is on avoiding different traps in the Christian life, but does not touch on issues specific to women in the workforce. I think this is a good general devotional for women, but is not one geared toward working women or the issues women will face in the workplace.

Chapter Topics

1. To Resist Pain or Use It - The ME Trap

Pain is part of every person's life and it is easy to try to avoid pain and embrace pleasure. However, pain can be a good thing as it helps us (1) turn from sin, (2) be God-centered not me centered, (3) get closer to God (4) be ready for God and (5) experience the presence of God. We should share these blessing of pain by serving (1) those in need, (2) until your "weary of doing well" and (3) in sorrow.

2. To Pursue Wealth or Grace - The Money Trap

We are tempted to compare ourselves with someone richer or more affluent than we are. But such greed (1) convinces us we need more, (2) enslaves us in idolatry, (3) leads to self-destruction, (4) produces addiction and (5) values presents over presence. God's antidote to greed is generosity, which encourages us to give our things away and give ourselves away. A life well lived in Christ is more valuable than money and we are to be good stewards of what the Lord gives us.

3. To Speak Wisely or Foolishly - The Mouth Trap

The tongue is powerful - it can build up or tear down and we are to control our tongue as Jesus controlled His. We are to season our speech with grace, avoid all profanity (obscenity, blasphemy, idle words, cursing, nagging, gossip, criticism and slander) and reflect Christ with our speech.

4. To Value your Time or Fritter it Away - The Minute Trap

We all are given a certain amount of time on earth. Our time belongs to God, our lives are as fragile as a flower and death is certain. We need to use our time to develop a relationship with God, taking care of eternal business, and making each moment count. Biblical models for time spent well include Daniel and Jesus.

5. To Live for Self or the Spirit - The Morality Trap

Each of us encounters dilemmas in our lives and we need God's wisdom - that is knowledge or insight that lies outside of our own human understanding. Ignoring God's wisdom leads us into the morality trap - questioning the faithfulness of God and tempting us to commit spiritual adultery (loving the work more than God) through:

- double mindedness - having second thoughts about the feasibility of trusting God to help us with life choices
- dubious choices - questioning that in God's infinite wisdom He knows something we do not
- passions - questioning / violating Christian codes of behavior
- permissive influences - becoming complacent about carnality
- position - pride, chasing after position of prestige or power
- possessions - chasing after things we can easily do without and that might choke out our spiritual life

The only people who can commit spiritual adultery against God are Christians as they are His spiritual bride. When this happens we need to repent and return to God.

6. To Develop God's God's Gifts or Waste Them - The Ministry Trap

Those who teach and pass on scriptural knowledge are most susceptible to the ministry trap. To avoid this trap, we must teach ourselves before teaching others and must be more concerned about studying scripture than the status that may come from teaching it. To teach ourselves, we must learn to pray, study the Scriptures and learn to be Holy. Five ministry traps discussed are (1) the pride trap, (2) the numbers trap, (3) the credentials trap, (4) the perfectionism trap and (5) the materialism trap.

7. To Persevere Under Trials or Protest Your Life - The Misery Trap

This can also be called the "poor-me" trap, feeling so sorry for ourselves that we never feel sorry for others. The hope for those caught in this trap is that we have hope in Christ's return and eternal life

in heaven. Surviving this trap requires waiting on the Lord (trust, prayer, patience and perseverance), but not putting everything else in life on hold under the difficult situation is past.

8. To Stand for Truth or Abandon It - The Mystical Trap

The mantra of this trap is, it doesn't matter what you believe, as long as it is sincere. However, it is the object of our faith / belief that is the key. It is not a head belief that generates spiritual passion, but a sacrificial love within us that spurs us to serve God, His kingdom and His people. A well-balanced life will produce both faith and deeds.