

ENDORSEMENTS AND COMMENTS



This Book Raised Me

As a young woman in the early seventies, I found myself a wife and a mother without skills to do either very well. What did God expect of me in training my children? How could I teach them, since I was an inexperienced Christian myself? Where could I find instruction for a better marriage? How could I fit my already busy life into God's service?

Then I found Jane McWhorter's book, *She Hath Done What She Could*. This book answered so many of my questions! Before she ever met me, Jane was 'raising' this young wife and mother to do it God's way!

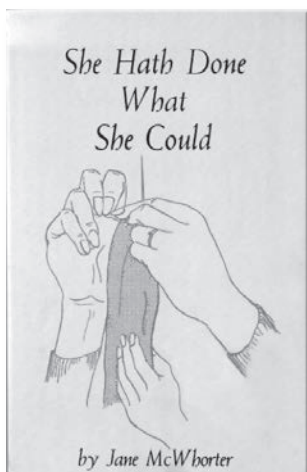
Jane McWhorter took seriously the command in Titus 2:3–5 to teach the younger women how to "love their husbands and to love their children." Jane has helped me so many times through her books. And I went to *She Hath Done What She Could* over and over until it was dog-eared.

Not everyone had Christian influences as they were growing up. I was one who struggled with my Christianity in my youth. I looked to experienced Christian role models for guidance.

Jane was my mentor without even realizing it. I have always loved her and appreciated all her guidance even though I met her only at lectureships and ladies' days. She was an outstanding Christian lady who left a legacy so that even today she is "raising" a new generation, not to mention her inspiration in all of her writings to those of us now in our more mature years! She motivates us to continue in His Word through her writings.

I wholeheartedly endorse *She Hath Done What She Could* in its facelifted revision—it is a faith lift as well. I look forward to studying it with my ladies' class.

—Teresa Glenn
Lynchburg, Virginia



Mom's First Book

Back in the sixties, Mom's days were filled with raising children, teaching school, and being a preacher's wife. She tossed around ideas for a book she would write someday.

Little did she imagine the future! Following a car accident that nearly cost her life, Mom's recovery period provided her a lot of time to think. She realized that each day was a precious gift and that "someday" was not guaranteed. When she was strong enough to sit up, Mom began the painstaking task of typing her thoughts. It was a laborious process, accom-

plished by the use of a manual typewriter and a single finger, which was her only functioning one.

She presented me with my own copy of the original *She Hath Done What She Could* on my nineteenth birthday. The dedication page read "Lovingly dedicated to use in His service from a heart overflowing with love and gratitude for the gift of life itself." Mom added, "And for the special privilege of being allowed to see you reach your adult years!"

This book ignited a passion for writing in Mom. Nothing would please her more than to know that her work is continuing, even though she has gone on to be with the Lord. I am gratefully reminded of Hebrews 11:4—(s)he being dead still speaks.

—Kathy McWhorter Kendall

Mom Did What She Could

As news traveled regarding Mom's condition, close to a thousand letters flooded the hospital. Mom confided, "I don't understand why so many people are writing me letters. I've never done anything special; I simply do what everyone else does!"

I replied, "Well, Mom, you have written over a dozen books and have groups who fly you all over the United States to speak at their conferences." But she just shook her head.

As Mom dozed, I began to read the letters. As touched as I was with what people said, the greater impact lay in what they did not say. The majority never mentioned anything about Mom's books or her speaking engagements. Instead, letter after letter shared how she had shown them some act of kindness, some dating back thirty or more years:

- You wrote me notes of encouragement.
- You always remembered birthdays and anniversaries.
- You shared a cup of coffee and a listening ear when problems overwhelmed me.
- You regularly visited my mom at the nursing home.
- You came by to encourage me in jail.
- You dropped by my house simply to give me a hug and a single rose after my miscarriage when I was a single girl.

Nothing Mom did was expensive, out of the ordinary, or time consuming. She was loved because she didn't wait on the monumental opportunity for a good deed. Instead she acted on the daily, seemingly insignificant opportunities to ease a burden and show an act of kindness. Don't we often walk right past the same opportunities and either ignore them or choose no action?

When Mom awakened, I told her about reading the letters. "I know now what you meant when you said you'd never done anything out of the ordinary."

Mom smiled, nodded, and said, "You get it." She wanted me to know that a life of tremendous impact isn't dependent on being a bestselling author or a speaker. Instead, we make deep impressions when we act on the small, seemingly insignificant opportunities to extend the love of God.

Her life was well spent. Simply put . . . Mom did what she could.

—Greg McWhorter

She Hath
Done
What She Could

Jane McWhorter

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Lovingly dedicated to use in His service
from a heart overflowing with love
and gratitude for the gift of life itself.



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PREFACE

What Is That in Thine Hand?

These lessons come from a heart overflowing with love and gratitude to Almighty God. I completed the rough manuscript before my husband, children, and I were involved in a head-on collision in October 1970. When the cast was removed from my right hand—one of my many injuries—I had no use of that hand. Three different nerves were injured. The doctors gave me little real hope of ever using it again.

During the months that followed, I thought a lot about hands as mine lay in two different braces. I promised God that I would not complain over the loss of the use of any of my limbs. It seemed that my mind and the rest of my body were going to be normal, and I was very grateful for that.

As I looked at my hands, I thought back over the years. I confess I took them for granted then. Slowly, after much exercise, the injured hand gradually became more functional. How well I remember the time I was able to pat my little boy's sleeping face. How strange. I had never even considered that as a blessing.

The creeping recovery continued. I had to write and type with my left hand. Every day I gave myself "writing lessons." Slowly, reluctantly, those torn-up muscles began to obey my brain.

Now, although my little finger will not bend, I use my right hand quite normally—cooking, washing, sweeping, sewing for my daughter. I have even returned to the task of teaching third graders how to write. (I now teach with more sympathy and understanding.) Wouldn't your heart overflow with thanksgiving for such blessings?

The personal references serve one purpose. I am saying to you: *Don't take the ability to use your hands for granted.*

We may not possess any special talent, but no extraordinary abilities are required for the services discussed in this book—only a desire to try. Remember, the one-talent man was not condemned for not possessing several talents. He was rebuked for hiding that talent—for not even trying to use it to serve his master (Matthew 25:24–27).

Take a good look at your hands. If they are reasonably normal, put them to work in God's service. Examine the common things within your grasp—a pen, a coffee pot, a covered dish, a Bible, a Bible storybook, flannel graph figures, a wedding ring, a broom and mop, a scrap of material, a tin can, a child's tiny fingers, scissors, a paintbrush, a steering wheel, a flower pot, a tract, a DVD—all everyday objects that any woman can use to glorify God. The anointing of Christ's feet required no special ability—only a precious ointment and willing hands. Our Lord rewarded this menial task with the promise: "Wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her" (Mark 14:9). *She hath done what she could.* She used what was in her hands.

Think of Christ's hands. The same hands that touched little children and healed the sick also knew agony and suffering as they were nailed to the cross.

- Those scarred hands were instrumental in proving the divinity of our Lord to His apostles: "Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself" (Luke 24:39).
- To doubting Thomas, Jesus said, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands" (John 20:27).

- It was this touch which precipitated one of the most unwavering confessions of faith ever uttered: “My Lord and my God” (John 20:28).

Look at your hands. Think how much Christ’s hands suffered for your sake. Meditate on the truths in these lessons. In judgment, if God should ask you the same question He asked Moses: “What is that in your hand?” (Exodus 4:2), what will you say?

—Jane McWhorter

Note by Jane to the publisher in the margin of the revised manuscript:

I sobbed when I read the above text again. God has been so good. This has been a time of great blessings—eight books by me, one by Don and me, and two by other women and me. The book She Hath Done What She Could started it all, as clumsy as it was then. The dedication has special meaning to me. Oh, He has been so good. Who would ever have dreamed what would follow?

INTRODUCTION

Can you imagine the church without any organized programs? How many needs would be neglected? However, those who work only in these organized efforts miss the joy that comes from spontaneous service in His kingdom. Usually a woman who daily seeks individual opportunities to help others will also give her full cooperation to a formal program of work. This book is designed to help a Christian woman find more avenues of service.

The theme for our study is the beautiful story of the woman who poured ointment on our Lord's head and received His praise:

She has done what she could. She has come beforehand to anoint My body for burial. Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial to her (Mark 14:8-9).

Because of its beauty and sentimentality, the language of the King James Version is retained from the above passage in the book title: *She Hath Done What She Could*.

God does not hold you responsible for talents you do not possess, but He does expect you to use your ability to the fullest. Even if you are not capable of outstanding public service, there is something for you to do. Each woman teaches with her life, if not with her lips.

Too often we build our own prison walls with stones of doubt and fear of failure. We overlook the common, everyday things around us that may be used in His service. When Moses was making so many excuses for not leading His people, God asked him, "What is that in your hand?" (Exodus 4:2). He replied, "A rod." Only a common shepherd's rod, but God used it for the needed task.

Petty excuses for neglecting the Lord's work will not suffice at the day of judgment. How will we answer if He asks us the same question He asked Moses? We hold so many items in our hands each day—things that can be used to God's glory. How do we use our cooking utensils, our irons, our pens, our scissors and glue, our phones, our computers, our homes, our cars? Are we stewards of the material possessions God has let us use, or do we take selfish possession of them?

Service to others assumes a deeper significance when we realize this: Serving others is the only way we can minister to Christ because He is not physically present. Notice Matthew's comment at the crucifixion: "And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were looking on from afar" (Matthew 27:55).

How gladly we would have cared for His needs had we been there, yet He tells us that we serve Him by serving others. "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matthew 25:40).

Through the years I have worked beside many faithful women in the Lord's kingdom. To them I say, "I love you dearly. You will probably recognize your own examples in this study. Thank you from the bottom of my heart for all you have meant to me."



ACCEPTING WOMAN'S ROLE

*Man was not created for the woman's sake,
but woman for the man's sake.*

—1 Corinthians 11:9

This book will not focus on what a woman cannot do, because her work is positive. She can perform many services more effectively than a man can. How many men can adequately care for the needs of the sick? How many men can prepare a meal to show hospitality? Some, of course. But the list is endless of works in which women excel in talent and experience. Man has his work in God's service and woman has hers. God in His wisdom defined both. In this first lesson only, we will study God's will for Christian women as they work in His service.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Man was originally created to have dominion over lower forms of life (Genesis 1:26). God pronounced His creations good except for one thing: "It is not good that man should be alone," so woman was created from the beginning to be a "help meet for him" (Genesis 2:18 KJV). In other words, woman was intended to be a helper suitable for man. She was made for the glory of man (1 Corinthians 11:7). When a woman

assumes her God-given role as man's companion and helper, she achieves her greatest sense of accomplishment.



Obedience
is a learned,
willful
behavior—not
instinctive.

The original state of perfection did not last long. As a result of the wiles of the devil and woman's desire for something forbidden, she sinned and was driven from the garden, her husband along with her, for he also sinned.

Man's punishment is given in Genesis 3:17–19. Hard, physical labor became necessary for man to produce his food. “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread” (Genesis 3:19). God then pronounced the curse of death upon the human family: “For dust you are, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19).

Eve did not escape the consequences of her sin. Her punishment was twofold (Genesis 3:16). First, she would bring forth children in sorrow. Second, she was placed in subjection to her husband. He would rule over her.

✧ For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and _____ of God; but woman is the _____ of man. For man is not from _____, but woman from man. Nor was man created for the _____, but woman for the _____ (1 Corinthians 11:7–9).

✧ What are the two ongoing consequences of the first woman's sin? (Genesis 3:16).

1. _____

2. _____

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND THE WIFE'S SUBJECTION

In the book of Titus, Paul tells the older women to be teachers of the younger women. Among other things, they were to teach them to be “obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God may not be blasphemed” (Titus 2:5). Obedience as used here is a learned, willful behavior—not instinctive.

Peter further supports Paul's teachings in his general instructions:

Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives (1 Peter 3:1).

Notice that a woman cannot refuse to obey her husband because he isn't a Christian. As long as he does not ask her to go against God's commands, she must obey him, just as if he were a Christian.

Another direct command is given in Ephesians 5:22: “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”

 Define *submission*.

 How do the words *submit* and *obey* oppose the views of women in our culture? How do those views affect Christian women?

✧ Why must a Christian woman make a conscious choice to submit to her husband? What happens when she chooses not to be submissive?

WOMAN IS NOT THE ONLY ONE IN SUBJECTION

Women need not feel that God is discriminating against them. In God's system of law and order, His wisdom dictated that one of the two adults in a home should be the leader. Two bosses create confusion. Man received his punishment for his original sin (Genesis 3:17–19), and woman received hers (Genesis 3:16). Part of her punishment involved being placed under the rule of her husband. Even if there had been no punishment for sin, doesn't it make more sense to have one leader so as to have order in the home?

God extended His system of order to relationships other than husbands and wives. For example,

Citizens are subject to their government: “Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work” (Titus 3:1). “Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God” (Romans 13:1).

Servants are subject to their masters. “Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh” (1 Peter 2:18). Note that it did not matter if the masters were unjust. The servants still had to obey if there was to be order in society.

Christ was subject to the Father. God's system of subjection even extended to the Godhead. "Jesus said to them, 'My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work' " (John 4:34).

Note God's comparison of authority in Ephesians 5:23–24. The husband is over the wife even as Christ is over the church. The church is referred to as the bride of Christ (Revelation 21:9). The church is in subjection to the will of Christ, but His rule over His bride is one of love and tender concern for her welfare: "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her" (Ephesians 5:25).

PERSPECTIVE VS. RESENTMENT

If a woman will look on her submission to her husband in the proper manner, she should feel no resentment. Instead of considering herself inferior, she will feel loved and cherished, protected from many cares of this world. Certainly no husband who truly loves his wife will make decisions affecting her without first considering her wishes and preferences. Under this system, children may grow up in peace and harmony instead of living in an atmosphere of tension and confusion which results when a husband and wife determine to move in opposite directions.

Notice the logical reasoning behind God's plan. Respect for authority is the only reasonable way to carry on any group activity. Mob rule is the result of everyone's having his own way. Witness it in our streets today.

All board members of a corporation are vital. However, if meetings are to be orderly, someone must have the final word, and that someone is the chairman of the board.



Mob rule:
Each person
has his
own way.

Elders rule over a congregation, not because they are so superior to the rest of the members, but because someone must be appointed to have the final word in matters of judgment and expediency. Reread the qualifications in Titus 1:5–9 and 1 Timothy 3:1–7. Aside from a few family qualifications, the things required of an elder should be found in every mature Christian.

A principal is appointed to govern a school, not because the teachers are his slaves, but because someone must have the final authority to ensure order.

When a woman realizes that she is not the only one in submission and that orderliness cannot prevail without God's system of authority, she should feel gratitude and not resentment.

 Name other areas of subjection.

 Discuss the necessity for respect of authority in business, in a congregation, in a school. What is the purpose of a leader?

 How has lack of respect for authority been a factor in mob violence?

WOMEN IN THE CHURCH

Consider a woman's proper relationship to men in the church in regard to teaching:

1. The Greek word for "silence" in 1 Timothy 2:11–12 is not the same word used for "silent" in 1 Corinthians 14:34. The word in 1 Corinthians means that not one word is to be spoken. (In this passage certain men were forbidden to speak a word for the sake of order.) In 1 Timothy the word translated "silence" means "quietness." The same Greek word is used in 1 Thessalonians 4:11: "that you also aspire to lead a quiet life." It occurs again in 2 Thessalonians 3:12: "that they work in quietness."
2. "To teach" implies a didactic discourse. A woman is forbidden to deliver such a message or in any way have the preeminence over men. There are conditions under which a woman may teach (considered in a later lesson), but at all times she must remain in the place God has appointed for her.
3. She is to be in subjection and must not usurp authority over the man. It is more than a husband-wife relationship. It is a broad principle in spiritual matters.

The application today: In their eagerness to work and their impatience over men's delays, women have been guilty of assuming authority God has not granted them.

SEMINARS, LADIES' CLASSES, PUBLIC GATHERINGS

While Christian women would not think of usurping authority over men by preaching, leading prayer, or leading singing during a worship

service, women have, nevertheless, assumed a position of authority in a number of areas. Consider some of these:

1. *Teacher training programs or family seminars.* Some have maintained that a woman is not teaching a Bible lesson if the setting is a teacher training program or a family seminar. Instead, she is sharing her knowledge of visual aids or family life with her brethren. Others have argued that this is not a public assembly of worship and that she is free to teach both men and women.

Think about these points. Is not a seminar carried on as a work of the church, paid for by funds from the treasury? Would the elders permit a woman to teach the book of Romans, for example, to a mixed class just because she had some special knowledge on the subject? Read the verses immediately preceding and following 1 Timothy 2:11–12. Is this passage not a broad principle applying to every phase of the woman-man relationship? Is a woman not assuming the preeminence and authority when she is in charge of a class?

2. *Ladies' class projects.* Most women want to be busy for the Lord, and it is logical for a ladies' class to share the work of the church. When the elders ask these classes to serve in areas in which women are more skilled than men, there is no usurping of authority. Women may even suggest things that the elders have not considered. But when ladies' classes devise their own projects, have their own treasury, and carry on their own program of work—whether it be benevolence or mission work—without the knowledge and desire of the elders, they are usurping the authority that rightfully belongs to man. Let us not be guilty of allowing our zeal to cause us to sin.
3. *Prayer in public gatherings.* In recent years girls and women have uttered all or part of the prayers offered in mixed groups. This has

happened in teenage retreats and in private gatherings of several families in a home. Since 1 Timothy 2:11–12 is a broad principle governing all phases of our lives, how can such a practice be justified?

✧ We have already studied that man is “the image and glory of God; but woman is the glory of man. For man is not from woman but woman from man. Nor was man created for the woman, but woman for the man” (1 Corinthians 11:7–9). How does this scripture relate to the three points listed above?

✧ Why would a Christian woman want to take the lead in the programs above?

✧ If any activity is questionable as to its being biblical, why would a Christian woman want to take the safest route possible? Why might she want to take a chance?

CONCLUSION

A woman who insists on her own way is not a mature Christian. God made certain laws governing woman's place in her home and in the church. Aside from punishment for Eve's sin, there is reason and orderliness in God's plan. Even if a woman does not agree with the plan and even if she does not see the reasoning behind it, she must submit her will to the will of God.

Woman's sphere is not a prison cell where she must sit in idleness. Her domain is a very beautiful one. Instead of fretting about things she cannot do, a Christian woman should strive to do everything possible within God's boundaries. We have not begun to do half of what we can rightfully do and be pleasing to God. The remainder of this study is designed to motivate us to use our full potential in our rightful places. The ideas are not new, but they are workable. If just one woman is motivated to work harder in the Lord's kingdom, then all the effort connected with this study is worthwhile.



INCREASING SPIRITUALITY

*The mind set on the flesh is death,
but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.*

—Romans 8:6

Now we come to the theme for the rest of our study: The Christian woman and her relationship to others in her various fields of service. Before she can effectively give of herself to others, she must examine herself. If she does not serve with the right attitude, she is likely to become resentful of the time and effort she invests. But as long as her spiritual nature is in tune with God, gratifying outward manifestations will automatically follow: “For as he thinks in his heart, so is he” (Proverbs 23:7).

WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

We all say that we want more of it, but what is spirituality anyway? A dictionary defines it as “predominantly spiritual character, as shown in thought, teachings, life, or appearance; devotion to the things of the spirit.” *Spirituality* means caring more for spiritual matters than for material possessions. Paul states it succinctly: