

Guarding the Gates of our Homes

Protecting our Homes through Personal Revelation

President Spencer W. Kimball said: “To be a righteous woman is a glorious thing in any age. To be a righteous woman during the winding up scenes on this earth, before the second coming of our Savior, is an especially noble calling. The righteous woman’s strength and influence today can be tenfold what it might be in more tranquil times. She has been placed here to help enrich, to protect, and to guard the home—which is society’s basic and most noble institution. Other institutions in society may falter and even fail, but the righteous woman can help to save the home, which may be the last and only sanctuary some mortals know in the midst of storm and strife” (“Privileges and Responsibilities of Sisters,” *Ensign*, Nov. 1978, 103).



Personal Revelation helps us protect our families

As women our mission is to protect our families (those we love) from Satan and the dangers he has placed in this world and to help them to come unto our Savior Jesus Christ. We must be strong and faithful and guard the gates of our homes to keep them places of security and strength for those who reside there. Sister Julie B. Beck said, “...women are like lionesses at the gate of the home. Whatever happens in that home and family happens because she cares about it and it matters to her. She guards the gate, and things matter to that family if they matter to her” (Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010). What an awesome responsibility we have as sisters! We can be lionesses at the gates of our homes.

*“...women are like lionesses
at the gate of the home.”
Julie B. Beck*

Sister Beck also said, “Never at any time in the history of the world have we needed stronger families and stronger homes....As each of us walks out of our own homes every day, how strong is that home that we are leaving? Is it a bastion of strength and power for us?” (Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010). As we each ask ourselves these questions we may wonder how we can make our homes stronger? How can we be the lionesses at the gates of our homes?

We believe that the best way to answer those questions is through personal revelation. Each home is different. Each family is different. Each person living in each home is different. We know that our Heavenly Father knows each home, family, and person. He knows how best to keep our homes safe from the fiery darts of the adversary. He knows what we women personally must do to become the lionesses at the gates of our own homes. He will give us that knowledge as we prepare ourselves to receive it. We must live worthily so that we may receive that personal revelation to combat Satan’s blows.

In her April 2010 Conference address, Sister Beck said, “The ability to qualify for, receive, and act on personal revelation is the single most important ability that can be acquired in this life” (“And upon the Handmaids in Those Days Will I Pour Out My Spirit,” *Ensign*, May 2010, 10-12). She also said, “Keeping the commandments, repenting, and renewing covenants made at baptism lead to the blessing of always having the Lord’s Spirit with us. When we have that spirit, we can walk with God. We can know His Son and make proper choices. With the Lord’s Spirit, weak and simple women can know what to do” (Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010). Think about that promise. The Holy Ghost can help each of us to know what to do! That is pretty amazing!



Personal Revelation comes more easily when we prioritize correctly

When we prioritize correctly personal revelation will come to us more easily. Personal revelation also helps us to understand where we need help in prioritizing and what things we most need to work on. As lionesses protecting the gates of our homes, we must have power that comes through properly prioritizing.

Sister Beck taught, “...when our priorities are out of order, we lose power. If we need power and influence to carry out our mission, then our priorities have to be straight.” (Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010) She spoke of sacred meetings she had with the Lord. Through personal revelation, she was able to come up with a plan of prioritizing that has helped her.

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Sister Beck’s plan places what she must do into three categories. These categories are as follows with examples or ideas below each:

- 1. Essential Things:** “What things must be taken care of, and if I don’t take care of them, the blessings of eternal life won’t be mine or my family’s?”
Examples: Revelation, reading the scriptures, praying, fasting, sacrament meeting, temple worship, repentance, and making and keeping covenants.
- 2. Necessary Things:** Think about your home and family. “What is necessary to create an environment or climate where the Spirit of the Lord would be?”
Examples: Homemaking, cleaning, cooking meals, smiling, teaching children to pray and walk uprightly before the Lord, family home evening, recreating with family, supporting husband, and loving one another.
- 3. Nice-to-do Things:** “[These] are the crafts and hobbies and recreational reading and movies and travel and lunches with friends....These things won’t save us. They add variety to our lives, but they won’t save us. When our time is devoted to those nice-to-do things, our priorities are out of order, and we lose power” (Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010).

Sister Beck said, “To walk with the Lord, we have to know what is essential, what is necessary, and what is nice to do. There is a lot to do, but I find that it is amazing how much I get to do on my nice-to-do list. The Lord blesses us with those mercies, but only if the other priorities are in order”(Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010).

Sister Belle Spafford, the ninth general Relief Society President said, “The average woman today, I believe, would do well to appraise her interests, evaluate the activities in which she is engaged, and then take steps to simplify her life, putting things of first importance first, placing emphasis where the rewards will be greatest and most enduring, and ridding herself of the less rewarding activities.”(A Woman’s Reach (1974), 23.)

Put Sister Beck’s Plan into Action:

1. Spend some time praying and pondering with the Lord about your priorities and the reasons you desire to prioritize.
2. Choose a place to record your priorities, i.e. on a piece of paper, a notebook, or the front of your journal.
3. Write down your priorities using the three categories Sister Beck suggests: Essential, Necessary, and Nice-to-do. This is your guide to prioritizing.
4. Remember the Lord knows what you and your family need to be strong. He wants to give you that pertinent information. Use personal revelation and gospel principles to help you realize what should be under each of your categories, then commit to live your life in accordance with those priorities.

Many Church leaders have spoken about priorities and the wonderful blessings that come to us as we give the most time to what matters most. The following are a few quotes that we have found helpful and inspiring:

“We may need to step back and consider if our actions are consistent with those things that matter most to us. As we place first things first in our lives, we can live each day without regret” (Mary Ellen Smoot, "Steadfast and Immovable", *Ensign*, Nov. 2001, 91–93).

“...[D]iligently doing the things that matter most will lead us to the Savior of the world” (Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Of Things That Matter Most", *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 19–22).

“Some uses of individual and family time are better, and others are best. We have to forego some good things in order to choose others that are better or best because they develop faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and strengthen our families” (Dallin H. Oaks, "Good, Better, Best", *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 104–8).



Personal Revelation will help you be the lioness at the gate of your home

When we seek personal revelation to help us place our priorities in order, we will feel more able to protect our homes and feel the influence of the Holy Ghost more abundantly in our lives. We will know how to strengthen our families and lead them to the Savior. “We know that when our priorities are out of order, we lose power. It takes personal revelation every day to help us prioritize and reprioritize and keep at bay the influences of the world that would draw us from what we are to do” (Julie B. Beck, BYU Women’s Conference 2010).

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If you are feeling a little bit overwhelmed by the prospect of reprioritizing your life to try to gain greater power to guard your home, remember the counsel given to the women of the Church by President Gordon B. Hinckley: “Rise to the great potential within you. I do not ask that you reach beyond your capacity. I hope you will not nag yourselves with thoughts of failure. I hope you will not try to set goals far beyond your capacity to achieve. I hope you will simply do what you can do in the best way you know. If you do so, you will witness miracles come to pass” (Motherhood: A Heritage of Faith (1995), 9).

Remember that Satan does not want you to be the lioness at the gate of your home. He wants to do whatever he can to make your gate easier to pass through. Sister Smoot said, “Lucifer is doing all that he can to divert us from those things of first importance. One of his most effective tools is to convince us that it is impossible to stay centered on spiritual things when the demands of life are so pressing” (“Steadfast and Immovable”, Ensign, Nov. 2001, 91–93). When we use personal revelation to help us prioritize we will be able to center our lives on the spiritual things that matter most. And when the demands of life are pressing down upon us, we will have the power that comes through the Spirit to help us continue in our mission as women in our homes.

We can and must be lionesses at the gates of our homes. What matters to us will matter to our families. If we prioritize and place the Lord first in our lives, He will be first in our homes. If we make prayer and scripture study important in our own lives, those things will be important to others that live in our homes. We will be strengthening our homes to withstand whatever Satan may throw at us. And we can protect our families with the power that comes through personal revelation.



Additional Reading

- ◆ Julie B. Beck, <http://lds.org/library/display/0,4945,9118-1-5187-1,00.html>, BYU Women’s Conference Address 2010.
- ◆ Virginia U. Jensen, "Creating Places of Security", *Ensign*, Nov. 1997, 89.
- ◆ Dieter F. Uchtdorf, "Of Things That Matter Most", *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 19–22.
- ◆ Dallin H. Oaks, "Good, Better, Best", *Ensign*, Nov. 2007, 104–8.