

michelle mckinney hammond

A
Woman's
Gotta Do
*what a
woman's
gotta
do!*



HARVEST HOUSE PUBLISHERS

EUGENE, OREGON

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by the International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved.

Verses marked KJV are taken from the King James Version of the Bible.

Verses marked MSG are taken from The Message. Copyright © by Eugene H. Peterson 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

Published in association with the literary agency of Alive Communications, Inc., 7680 Goddard Street, Ste #200, Colorado Springs, CO 80920. www.alivecommunications.com.

Cover by Koechel Peterson & Associates, Inc., Minneapolis, Minnesota

Cover illustration © iStockphoto / VectorsEdge

A WOMAN'S GOTTA DO WHAT A WOMAN'S GOTTA DO

Copyright © 2007 by Michelle McKinney Hammond

Published 2012 by Harvest House Publishers

Eugene, Oregon 97402

www.harvesthousepublishers.com

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

McKinney Hammond, Michelle

[Sassy girl's checklist for living, loving & overcoming]

A woman's gotta do what a woman's gotta do / Michelle McKinney Hammond.

p. cm.

Originally published: The sassy girl's checklist for living, loving & overcoming. ©2007.

ISBN 978-0-7369-2655-3 (pbk.)

ISBN 978-0-7369-4271-3 (eBook)

1. Bible. O.T. Proverbs XXXI—Devotional use. 2. Christian women—Conduct of life. 3. Conduct of life—Biblical teaching. I. Title.

BS1465.54.M35 2012

248.8'43—dc23

2011032579

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, digital, photocopy, recording, or any other—except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of the publisher.

Printed in the United States of America

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 / BP-NI / 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Contents

You Are Priceless

9

Embrace Your Season

13

Loving

25

Resourcefulness

35

Hospitality

43

Starting Your Day

51

Sowing & Reaping

57

Using Your Gifts
65

Giving
75

Persevering
85

Discretion
93

Gift of Influence
103

Success
113

Resilience
123

Living Wisely

133

Achieving Balance

143

Building Up Others

153

Inner Strength

163

Generosity

173

Master Checklist

181



Embrace Your Season

Who can find a virtuous woman?
for her price is far above rubies.

PROVERBS 31:10 KJV



ften quoted but not commonly seen, the search is on for the virtuous woman. *Chokmah* is the Hebrew word used to describe a woman of excellence, one who has mastered the art of skillful living. Skillful living hints at perfecting the delicate balance of the components of life so that each is performed well. No “jack of all trades and master of none” stuff going on here. Each area of life has been approached from a place of discipline and thoughtful consideration to the timing, logistics, and even the consequences of each choice. Faith has been supplemented with virtue because of the knowledge acquired to impart self-control, which ultimately leads to godliness with great gain, which in turn releases you to walk in unconditional love toward all you encounter.

But more than that, the art of skillful living has to do with having an understanding of the seasons of your life and the purpose for each season. This was the essential key to the excellence spoken of by Bathsheba, the wife of King David of Israel, to encourage her son Solomon in what to look for when seeking a wife. Whether you are married or single, you must be cognizant of the fact that timing is everything, although it's aligned equally with attitude. Our attitudes shape our words, which shape our actions. Those actions become habits that form our character. Our character determines

our destiny—a destiny that can be filled with blessings or curses based on our choices.

At the end of the day our Proverbs 31 lady was blessed by her husband and her children, and probably by her co-laborers and her community. She created a legacy that was far-reaching by aligning herself according to God's design and allowing His plan to unfold beautifully in the fabric of her life. The end result was an amazing tapestry that must have made God smile, which released favor and blessing into her life emotionally, materially, and spiritually.

Getting our priorities in order and choosing to focus on what is relevant for the hour and season we are in is crucial to having a systematic plan that works for our lives. God is a God of order. It is in that order that excellence is found. He created the seasons to reflect the cycle of our own lives. Truly there is a time for planting, a time of harvest, a time for eating the fruits of our labor, and a time for dying to give way to new and sweeter fruit. This cycle is present in every area of our lives—emotionally, relationally, financially, professionally, even spiritually. As we embrace our seasons, understanding their purpose and looking forward to the blessings on the other side of them, we are able to weather the transitions gracefully and reap a bountiful harvest from each one.

So what does that mean for you right where you are today? Well, if you are single, rejoice and take full advantage of all that is solely yours. Take advantage of the time, space, and resources you have to explore and enjoy every aspect of life. Be aware that seasons do pass, so plant well while you have everything at your disposal to do so.

Are you a newlywed? Rejoice in the honeymoon period of your life. This is a critical time for you to put certain things in place to secure your marriage. You help set the course of your future by what you pour into the heart of your husband in these early stages of becoming one. Build honor, trust, unity, and security. Make yourself a haven for him, one whom he looks forward to running

home to. Create habits now that will help lay the solid foundation your marriage will stand on. This is the beginning of the rest of your life. Build your house well.

Are you a new mother? Rejoice in this time that goes by so quickly. Take all the time you need to nurture that new, beautiful life and find your identity in the power of motherhood. After all, that precious little boy or girl might become a world leader based on your input and preparation. It is an awesome task and privilege to be responsible for the gift God puts in your care. Make mothering one of your primary priorities. Look forward to seeing your handiwork flourish into full bloom.

Are you a wife beyond your honeymoon years? Yours is the privilege of experiencing many incredible seasons—some warm, some hot, some cold—all of them occasions for greater growth and greater rewards if you weather each season well. Purpose to always be fruitful no matter what. Continue planting, watering, fertilizing, and harvesting. But also know when to rest and embrace the transitions, keeping in mind that the end goal is to bear fruit that remains, that leaves an indelible print of love and godliness on the lives you touch.

Are you a businesswoman? An entrepreneur? Plant carefully and prepare to reap what you have sown. Be a wise steward of your increase. Like the ant, be aware of the season for harvesting and storing and trust God to fill your storehouse to overflowing for the purpose of being able to pour out to others in need.

Are you an empty nester? In retirement? A widow? Look beyond yourself to see a field ripe for harvesting. There comes a time when the experiences we've gained, along with rewards both spiritual and financial, bring us to the place of benevolence. Where we use what God has given us to bless others. This is truly the greatest season—the full fruition of our labor manifesting one of the greatest blessings of all, the privilege of giving wholeheartedly.

To everything there is a season and a purpose. As we accept this truth and learn to embrace where we are, we grow in grace and in the sufficiency of all that we need in that season to walk in excellence. Two impulses we must resist are to lag behind and to grow impatient with where we are. Only you know which season you are in and what your attitude is toward that season. Begin now to take stock of where you are and how you view yourself in light of that knowledge. Then step up to the diva-licious challenge of being all that you were created to be—a woman of excellence, thriving in her purpose according to God's divine timing.

A good name is more desirable
 than great riches; to be esteemed is
 better than silver or gold.

PROVERBS 22:1

Check Yourself

- Do you walk in excellence? What do you do?

- How would you score yourself on a scale from one to ten, with one being in great shape, in the following areas?
 - spiritually _____
 - emotionally _____
 - physically _____
 - financially _____
 - relationally _____

- Which area could use improvement?

- What are your strengths in this area? Weaknesses?

- What three steps can you take toward improving in this area?
 - 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.

Personal Thoughts & Meditations

What do people say about you? If you overheard them talking about you, would you want to know and befriend that person? You can't please all of the people all of the time, so how do you find the balance for living a life that carries favor with those you encounter versus sacrificing who you really are in order to be a people pleaser? The secret is in first living to please God. The fruit of this selective living will be favor with those around you. Pursuing peace and walking in love are huge. And there's no room for pride

or being defensive. The catch-22 about pride is it eventually always makes you look like a fool. While you are busy posturing and promoting a specific image of yourself, people are seeing through the facade and forming negative conclusions about your character.

Replace defensive living with offensive and positive positioning. Seek to give what you want to receive no matter what. Don't take things personally. Most of the time whatever is going on around you and the reactions you encounter have very little to do with you. The response has to do with the accumulation of many experiences that particular person had before he or she even got to you. With this in mind, seek to bless that person instead of struggling to regain your own footing. Mastering this one thing will give you tremendous victory in the area of relationships. As you make pleasing God your goal, which includes His command to love your neighbor as you love yourself, the fruit of this decision becomes obvious: a legacy of good will. But most of all you will garner the pleasure of your heavenly Father, who just happens to be a King. And when the King smiles, there is favor.

Check Yourself

- What do people say about your character?
- What would you like them to say about you?
- What habits or attitudes do you need to change to get a more desirable review from others?

- If you met yourself at a function, would you want to be your friend? Why or why not?

Personal Thoughts & Meditations



The goal we've all been wired in our spirits to achieve is to live a value-added life. We were created to be priceless, to grow and make lasting contributions to the world and to the people around us. We should be a valuable commodity to those who experience life within our personal, social, and professional circles. The things we say and do add or subtract from our lives as well as the lives of others on a daily basis. I believe this is why the Bible tells us to begin with our thought life—to purpose to think on things that are true, honorable, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy (see Philippians 4:8). If this is what we are predisposed to mentally, our thoughts will manifest for all to see. What

proceeds from our mouths as well as our deeds will line up with God's design for us.

How the world longs to see individuals overflowing with integrity! This is what gives people hope. They long to believe that if they live a righteous life the results will be victorious. With so much bad news abounding, many wonder if there is anyone left who will not compromise his or her standards to get ahead in life. People want to see the unlikely suspect, the good guy who stands for what is right, overcome the obstacles of life with grace, humility, and aplomb. Why do we value this so much? Perhaps because this is a confirmation of the greatness of an awesome God and the virtues He extols. When we walk in excellence and integrity, others view a reflection of God. We are an extension of His power and virtue in the earthly realm. We all long to see God, and in a physical sense the way we see Him is in the eyes of people around us. This is valuable to the human spirit because goodness gives us more hope and more faith that God exists and He is truly good.

Check Yourself

- What do you think of yourself?
- Write a description of how you think others describe you.
- How can you reconcile your description of yourself with how others describe you?
- Why are you valuable in the life of your family? To your friends? In your place of employment? At your church?

- Would you like to increase your value to others? What will you do to accomplish this?

Personal Thoughts & Meditations