

# #WORKINGMOMLIFE

5-Day Guide for Working Moms to Boldly Step  
into Purpose-Filled Work



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# Welcome Letter

Sisters,

It's easy to feel like if work is winning, home is losing; and if home is winning, work is losing. Sound familiar? (My hand is raised in solidarity, in case you are wondering, because this certainly rings true for me!) You are not alone.

This Guide is for the working mom who...

- Feels like life is a tug of war between work and family
- Feels a little lonely and disconnected because juggling it all leaves little time for hobbies or deep friendships
- Wonders if she's a good mother
- Wonders if she's doing the right things
- Wants to be successful at work and at home
- Is loving her life but just wants to be proactive

Here's some good news: we don't have to neglect one job (mothering) to pursue the other (our profession), and vice versa. We really can drop the tug-of-war rope.

This Guide reflects my own journey as a working mother, the ongoing process of surrendering my tendency to overwork to the Lord, and asking God to line up my perspective on work with His. This is an invitation to recalibrate your perspective and step into your purpose-filled work.

Cheering you on!  
Meredith

# 01. Your Work-Life Reality

## FACTS ABOUT WORKING WOMEN

- 50% of the total American labor force is made up of women.
- Children are most likely to be raised by a single working parent or two married parents who are both employed.
- Only a minority of children will grow up in families with a full-time stay-at-home parent throughout their childhood.
- 41% of mothers are the sole or primary breadwinners for their family, including single mothers, mothers earning at least half of their total household income and mothers who out earn their husbands.
- Sons of working moms are more likely to contribute to chores and spend time caring for family.
- Adult daughters whose moms worked outside the home are more likely to work themselves, hold more supervisory responsibilities and earn higher wages than women whose mothers stayed home full time.
- Children who grow up in working-mother homes grow up to be just as happy as children of moms who stayed home.
- 56% of all working parents say finding work-life balance is difficult.

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WHAT STATISTIC OR DATA POINT STOOD OUT TO YOU MOST AND WHY?

This data represents millions of working women! There is great diversity in the types of jobs and fields women work in, and, the same is true for each woman utilizing this Guide. Our types of work, and even the reasons we work, may differ from one another, but we share some important common ground:

- We carry responsibilities for our family, and we carry responsibility outside of our family - our jobs.
- Work is one part of our multifaceted lives.
- God created us to do good work, and He has good work for us to do.

Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:8-10, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

DESCRIBE SOME OF THE PROJECTS OR WORK YOU ARE DOING RIGHT NOW.

Our lives are dynamic and changing. The demands and challenges of this season in our lives likely look different from seasons past. Future seasons will bring their own unique opportunities and challenges. Some of the most important work we've been entrusted with isn't in our profession or even with our children, it's in our own hearts and lives. Before looking to adjust how we engage with our outward work, it's important to understand where we are right now, in this present moment, so we can maximize our growth potential and recognize where we might have some work to do in our own lives and hearts.

Take five minutes to complete the Work-Life Inventory. It's important to not overthink your responses! The purpose of this exercise is twofold: 1) To take a good look at what areas of your life are as healthy and vibrant as you'd like for them to be, and what areas might need a little attention; and 2) To practice a tool you can use as often as is helpful. (Some women might find it helpful to use the Work-Life Inventory a few times a year, or even once a quarter.

# WORK-LIFE INVENTORY

This inventory represents different areas of a working mom's life. Place an "X" on the line to represent your current reality. Is it "Thumbs down" or "in Check"

## WORK

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## FRIENDSHIPS

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## MARRIAGE/ROMANCE

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## CHILDREN

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## BALANCE

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## REST & SLEF-CARE

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## ATTITUDE

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## FAITH

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WHICH OF THESE CATEGORIES WOULD HAVE LOOKED DIFFERENT A YEAR AGO? WHAT WOULD THE DIFFERENCES BE?

SOMETIMES, AREAS OF OUR LIFE MOVE TOWARD A THUMBS DOWN FOR A BRIEF SEASON, BUT IT WOULDN'T BE WISE TO LEAVE THEM THERE. OF THE ONES CLOSER TO THE THUMBS DOWN, IS THERE ONE YOU'D LIKE TO IMPROVE? IF SO, HOW WOULD DOING SO ADD VALUE TO YOUR LIFE?

### **TIME TO PRAY**

- Thank God for creating you to do good work
- Ask for God's guidance, help, and intervention in the areas on your Work-Life-Inventory you'd like to improve

# 02.

# Understanding Your Why

The question of, “What do you do?” is often one of the first points of discussion when meeting someone new in a social setting. What we do is important, but the more important question is “Why?” Our WHY is the springboard for our WHAT.

Among working moms, the reasons for working are as diverse as the women themselves. As this Guide was prepared, a handful of working moms were asked to explain their why. Here are a few of their answers:

*“I work to help provide health insurance for my family.”*

*“I’m paying off student loans while also getting tuition assistance for my children.”  
(This mom works at a university.)*

*“I love using the skills and education I have to benefit others.”*

*“I genuinely love what I do, but we also need me to work to financially support my family.”*

*“What I do is meaningful, challenging, and I get to work with great people!”*

*“Unexpectedly, I’m suddenly the sole provider for my children.”*

*“I’m modeling a good work ethic for my child.”*

*“I worked because I loved being a nurse and helping people through whatever crisis brought them to the emergency department.” (This mom is retired.)*

*“I’m a better wife and mom when I work.”*

You’ll notice the responses are simple and, in many cases, quite practical – no flowery language or complex metaphors. Most of these were quick from-the-heart answers without a lot of time to wordsmith or edit. You have space below to provide your own quick from-the-heart answer (don’t overthink it!).

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WHY DO YOU WORK?



**Whether you are working primarily from a place of passion or primarily out of necessity of provision, your work is important and honorable.**

Have you noticed the increasing pressure our culture places on people to aspire to have their income-producing work also be their purpose and meaning-producing work? Social media glamorizes turning your passion into a paying job. Sure, some individuals do earn a living by getting paid to facilitate their life’s passion, but the concept of a “perfect job” is the exception, not the norm.

Many people feel pressure to find their passion and get paid to do it, or to turn their favorite hobby into a business, and it simply may not be possible or even preferable. The increasing pressure to turn passions into income-producing work can be discouraging and even harmful at times. It can cause who cannot earn a full-time living getting paid for their passion to feel like a failure. Those who aren’t sure what their passion is may feel less-than. It may even steal the joy of enjoying a passion in your off-hours if you think really living your passion means turning it into a job. And, perhaps worst of all, it may minimize the valuable work people primarily from a desire to provide for their families versus living out of a place of passion.

Some of us are working primarily out of passion, while others are working primarily out of necessity of provision. We all have a passion and provision rating for our work. For instance, the working mom focused on irradicating debt may be going all-in on provision right now in multiple jobs she doesn’t love. For her, passion for the actual work may be low and while she might rate provision high. For the working mom building a nonprofit from the ground up, her rating for provision might be low because her compensation is low, but passion might be high. The combination of passion and provision is unique to each person, and there is no right or wrong answer.

ON A SCALE OF 1-10 HOW DO YOU CURRENTLY RATE:

PASSION

PROVISION

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO CONFIDENTLY EMBRACE YOUR WORK AS HONORABLE? WHAT ABOUT THE WORK OF OTHERS?

Paul wrote in Colossians 3:17, "And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him" (NIV).

HOW CAN YOU APPLY COLOSSIANS 3:17 TO YOUR WORK?

### **TIME TO PRAY**

- Thank God for the work you do. If you are in a season of needing new work, ask Him for what you need.
- Ask for His help in living out Colossians 3:17.

# 03. God Created You to Do Good Work

WHAT IS ONE SPECIFIC TASK OR RESPONSIBILITY FROM YOUR WORK THAT YOU REALLY ENJOY?

WHEN DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR WORK MATTERS MOST?

WHEN DO YOU FEEL LIKE YOUR WORK DOESN'T MATTER VERY MUCH?

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Though the workplace is not without challenges, we know women were created for purposeful work in their everyday lives and workplaces. Here are three biblical truths for working women:

1. God created you to do good work.
2. Your identity is not determined by what you do.
3. You are an ambassador.

You are created in the image of a God who works. We often consider work to be a very tangible, earthly construct, but the way we view work is actually a deeply spiritual issue. Genesis chapter 1 holds the story of creation. The first line of scripture declares, "In the beginning, God created...." In other words, in the beginning, God went to work. The chapter continues with God speaking our world, the universe, and everything else into existence - all His good creation.

In the early chapters of Genesis, God introduces men and women as the imago dei, His image-bearers in the world.

**Genesis 1:26-28 (HCSB)**

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness.*

*They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."*

*So God created man in His own image;*

*He created him in the image of God;*

*He created them male and female.*

*God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."*

Don't let the word "multiply" throw you. It's easy to assume Adam and Eve's responsibility for multiplication was limited to procreation. However, as the image of the invisible God and the firstborn of all creation (Colossians 1:15), Jesus fulfilled all that God appointed Adam and Eve to do - perfectly - and he was not married. Jesus did not have biological children but He did produce disciples and called all of His followers to do the same (see Matthew 28:19 for Jesus' commission to his disciples and all believers). This is important for all of us - those who are married, single, mothers or, like Jesus, those who have no children. We are "fruitful" and we "multiply" when we pass on our faith to our friends, coworkers, neighbors, children and family members.

Because we are created in His image, we are called to work - to create, cultivate, sustain and keep the world as his representatives. The phrase "fill the earth" means "bring to full flower," to develop the earth's resources to the fullest.<sup>2</sup> We get to partner with God in fully developing and cultivating all of the potential in us, in others, and in our world.

*"As Creator, God could have placed Adam and Eve in the midst of a highly developed world with roads, bridges, buildings, technology and everything needed for modern life as we know it. Instead, he gave us the earth and all its resources, and appointed us stewards, developers, and co-creators with himself." - Bill Peel*

WHAT DOES GENESIS 1:26-28 AND THE QUOTE BY BILL PEEL TELL YOU ABOUT YOUR IDENTITY?

WHEN YOU CONSIDER GOD APPOINTED US AS STEWARDS, DEVELOPERS AND CO-CREATORS WITH HIM, WHAT DOES THIS INFER ABOUT YOUR VALUE TO GOD AND THE VALUE OF YOUR WORK?

ARE ANY OF THESE THOUGHTS AND IDEAS NEW FOR YOU? IF SO, HOW MIGHT THEY SHAPE YOUR PERSPECTIVE OF YOUR WORK?

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### **TIME TO PRAY**

- Thank God for creating you to do good work.
- Ask for His help recognizing the good work He has for you to do.

# 04.

# What you Do doesn't Determine Who You Are

Take a second look at the Genesis passage from yesterday.

## **Genesis 1:26-28 (HCSB)**

*Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth."*

*So God created man in His own image;*

*He created him in the image of God;*

*He created them male and female.*

*God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."*

In the very next chapter, Genesis 2, sin and brokenness enter God's good and perfect creation, changing everything.

### **Before Sin & Brokenness**

Work was good and perfect.

Man and woman's identity were securely and fully in God.

Man and woman lived in perfect relationship with God.

### **After Sin and Brokenness**

Work became more difficult and laborious.

Man and woman were tempted to find identity outside of God.

Brokenness and sin separated man and woman from God, requiring a Savior (Jesus) to set things right.

While brokenness and sin make work more difficult and laborious, it doesn't mean work itself is bad; it's still good and necessary. In fact, work is good because God created it, but the brokenness of sin distorted God's good plan for work. Work was never designed to carry the weight of our identity and worth. **We weren't created in the image of our job titles, our compensation or the organization we work for. We were created in the image of God.**

Searching for identity in work ultimately leads to discouragement, discontent, disillusionment and disengagement. Why? **Work is an expression of our identity, not the source of it.**

WHAT ARE SOME INDICATORS YOU MIGHT BE PURSUING IDENTITY IN OUR WORK?

WHERE DO YOU SEE OUR CULTURE CELEBRATING AND PUSHING FOR WORK AS IDENTITY?

### TIME TO PRAY

- Confess where you've seen evidence of sin and brokenness when it comes to your work.
- Ask God to firmly establish your identity in Him rather than in what you do.

# 05.

# You are an Ambassador

God strategically places Christian women in their workplaces and inside their spheres of influence. We are called to work as Christ's ambassadors in our daily lives, including our workplaces.

## 2 Corinthians 5:20a (HCSB)

*Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, certain that God is appealing through us.*

This verse is part of a larger explanation of the "ministry of reconciliation" appointed to every Christ follower. It explains our role in God's big-picture work of bringing the world into relationship with him. All of our day-to-day work should be an extension of, and in alignment with, God's big-picture work.

God has prepared an important role for us – that of ambassador. An ambassador is regarded as the personal representative of the king or leader who sends them, and they carry out the interests of the sender to the people throughout the land. They are usually deployed to a specific area, region, people group or country.

In this way, you've been strategically deployed to your daily workplace. You have access to people others may not be able to reach. As an ambassador, you are a truth-teller, hope-bearer, light-giver and burden-sharer as you bring Christ into your daily responsibilities and interactions.

**You are an ambassador!**

Ambassador: personal representative of Christ deployed to the people in my daily life.



HOW DOES EMBRACING OUR ROLE AS AMBASSADORS REFRAME YOUR PERSPECTIVE ON OUR WORK AND THE PEOPLE WE INTERACT WITH THROUGH YOUR WORK?

WHAT ARE SOME PRACTICAL WAYS YOU CAN LIVE OUT BEING A TRUTH-TELLER, HOPE-BEARER, LIGHT-GIVER AND BURDEN-SHARER IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

The truths we've unpacked over the last few days all point to the fact that your work matters. All your work matters - your work as a mother, your work at your job, your work as a volunteer, etc. **Your work is one way you can partner with God's work.**

#### TIME TO PRAY

- Tell God what help you need to fully embrace your role as an ambassador.
- Thank Him for the specific truths and insights you've gained through this Guide.

## AS AN AMBASSADOR, YOU ARE A...

**Truth-teller:** one who speaks truth as both an encourager and a challenger.

**Hope-bearer:** one who shares hope and encouragement with others through the way they live and the intentional words they speak, showing there is hope beyond our earthly circumstances.

**Light-giver:** one who takes the light of Jesus into dark places, providing clarity, discernment and wise illumination into areas that might otherwise be confusing.

**Burden-sharer:** one who demonstrates empathy and compassion by walking with others through trials and seasons of difficulty.



## About the Author

**MEREDITH KING** catalyzes ministry leaders with compelling, biblically-based resources proven to strengthen kingdom builders for higher impact. She is the same whether on stage or in a coffee shop sitting across the table from you — disarmingly kind and devoted to helping leaders maximize their impact. Meredith is a world-class leader, life-changing coach, and nonprofit executive.

Meredith's entrepreneurial and strategic instincts led her to create and sustain national initiatives with global impact. In addition to two decades of ministry and nonprofit leadership, Meredith pulls from her lived experience as a pastor's kid, pastor's wife and working mom. She invests in thousands of top-level leaders worldwide every year through executive coaching, insanely practical strategic planning and wisdom-filled keynotes.

Meredith is the executive director of Integrus Leadership, founder and board member of True to Life Ministries and the author of "Immovable: Reflections to Build Your Life and Leadership on Solid Ground." She and her husband, David, have been married for 16 years and have two energetic daughters, Abigail and Ella. Meredith joyfully survives on coffee and queso.

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