

**RISE UP AND SHINE – Episode #69: Let's Talk About Womanhood**



**FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT**

**Ashley**

This is Episode 69. Let's Talk About Womanhood. You're listening to the rise up and shine podcast with Claudine and Ashley as an empty nester and a mom with young kids, we have both shared very similar and very real struggles. From chaos to coaches, we now help other women live an authentic and meaningful life. So tune in weekly for girl talk and tips on how you too can rise up and let your light shine bright. This is the rise up and shine podcast.

**Claudine**

I am woman hear me roar.

**Ashley**

Anything you could do, I could do better.

**Claudine**

We are mothers, daughters, sisters, friends, grannies, CEOs, secretaries, nurses, doctors, teachers, you name it. We are women. And today we are talking about the power of women. Few days ago was International Women's Day. And we thought, what better time to talk about this subject, especially since Ashley and I are both women?

**Ashley**

Yeah, you've been a woman a lot longer than I have, share your wisdom.

**Claudine**

Just a couple decades. But you know, it is an interesting topic. And speaking of that I have I have a few years on you. And just seeing the role of women in our culture in our society has certainly changed since I was let's say, 10 years old, in the last four plus decades, it's really changed and things are so much more open. And even to think that before 1920, we didn't have a right to vote. It's such a strange concept, because you and I have both had that ability in that freedom to do so since we were 18. But Ashley, tell me a little bit about what you see, as your role as a woman.

**Ashley**

So the older I have gotten, you know, I'm about a little over a year, until I hit 40. I'm gonna give my age out here. But I have really learned a lot about the role of being a woman, and especially as I got married,

had children and the kids are getting older, is something that I've really had to reflect on a lot, because I feel like I'm kind of figuring it all out, you know, I feel like I'm just kind of figuring out my role, my identity, and one thing I really came to the realization of was that my role in life doesn't necessarily dictate my identity. They're two separate things. So I, I struggled a lot when my kids were younger. And you know, because you put yourself aside, that's what most of us women, do. We, if not all we put ourselves aside, to serve others to meet others needs to, you know, whatever, whatever role you're in, you tend to nurture and care for others. And especially, you know, I was codependent as well. And so I completely put myself to the side, I didn't care for myself the way I should have done and it, I really wrestled with the difference between my role and my identity, I thought the role I was in was my identity. And it's been a lot of healing and discovery, awareness to recognize that no, this is my role I'm in right now. It does not dictate my identity, my identity is in Christ, my identity is completely separate. The role is I just happened to be wife, I happen to be Mom, I happen to be daughter, sister, friend, those are my roles. But my identity was completely different. So really going on this discovery of, you know, the woman I want to be and growing into the woman I really want to be, you know, who God called me to be who God created me to be who he's waiting for me to be that woman that I have to go through this discovery period, to see what does that look like? And it does not necessarily take my role, you know, again, wife, Mom, that dictates that identity. So I had to kind of step out of that for a little bit to really get to the nitty gritty good parts of who I am as a woman.

### **Claudine**

Hmm, that is just absolutely fascinating. I've never really looked at it that way. You know, it's so interesting for me because as I pondered on this subject before we were getting together, I thought about my childhood and again, I've got a few decades on you. So as a young child or teen it was in the 70s. It was a time when women were just coming into their own, but yet I was raised with very traditional roles. You know, mom stayed at home mom cooked. Mom was a teacher, so she did have a job, but she was on our schedule, and then everything else revolved around us and that was her role, but I really saw traditional roles being lived out. That's really what I saw. But the odd thing is that when I was 11, my parents sent me to a private girls school out in Los Angeles that was so different it really whether it was subliminally or directly said, I don't remember But I remember coming out of there after six years realizing I'm not going to be the secretary of the organization, I'm going to be the president, I'm not going to be the nurse, I'm going to be the doctor. And so I have these two very different, almost conflicting views of womanhood. Like, from my school years, I learned to value that I could achieve anything that I could do anything I wanted, that I could have any job I wanted, that I could send to whatever heights I wanted. But then in my own home life, I really learned that I would be the primary caretaker nurture of my family. And so it's just really interesting, growing up with two very differing views of women's role or even identity. Like you said, it can be very confusing because most of us say I'm a mom, or I'm a friend or I'm a daughter, of course, I've got the best role, which is granny and you don't, yet but that's the best role. And I love identifying with that one, because there really is no greater joy. Everything they say is absolutely true about being a grandparent.

## **Ashley**

Oh yeah, you get to spoil them, but then you get to return them.

## **Claudine**

I know that's wonderful. But honestly, we try really hard not to spoil our grandchildren, because we're trying to honor her daughter. But it's really hard. Like we were at the store the other day, and he really wanted a toy. And it took everything in me. I told my daughter, I'm like, it's so hard not to buy him something. He's so cute. And she's like, Well, you didn't buy us stuff when we cried for a toy or like, yeah, you're right. Okay. But, um, anyway, so it's just very interesting how far we've been able to go in while we're talking about this subject, I think about all the women that have had a great impact in my life, like, I wouldn't be the woman I am. If it weren't for these amazing women in my life. First of all, of course, my mom, who really was such a gentle kind spirit. So I learned so much from her. And she would always tell me you can do or be anything you want, if you work hard enough. So like she never limited me. And I learned from her to be quiet and gentle. Of course, sometimes being quiet. It's not great. But that's a whole nother topic. But I think I learned from her the beauty of gentleness. And so I'm really grateful that I had a mom like I did you know, and then I have two daughters, who are both adults now that are my constant inspiration. I'm just so inspired by both of them. There's such strong, confident, courageous women, I mean, ones in her 30s and ones in her late 20s. And I just look at them in awe. And it's not because of me, but it's despite me that they became amazing women. I'm not gonna take the credit here, but they're amazing. And they truly inspire me. And you'll get that joy to Ashley when Nicola grows, and she's an adult, and you're just gonna stand there in awe, like, How did this happen? This is amazing. She's amazing. So.

## **Ashley**

I already feel that.

## **Claudine**

Yes, of course you do. Of course you do. But there's something when they're adults, and they're on their own. And they're like making it on their own. You know, good for you. You can do it. So and of course, countless sisters and friends and spiritual mentors that have helped me learn how to be a godly wife because I surely did not know how to be one when I was first married. And we were on the verge of divorce, and luckily learned how to apply the scriptures to our marriage. But I had godly women that had been through the battle before me, that had fought the fight and came out on the other side, and were able and willing to teach me to sit with me and teach me and help me correct things in my behavior, that we're just not going to help me have a long lasting marriage. And so I'm so grateful to those women. So so many women in our lives.

## **Ashley**

Yeah, well, there's a reason why we need each other you know, I mean, we we really understand each other and we can help pull each other up, especially those who are in a different stage of life. That's why I really appreciate our relationship Claudine, because you have really helped mentor me and how to be a godly loving patient wife to my husband, and how to understand him better even and also I think one of the big things you've taught me is when to let go you know what things really just let go this Don't fight that I've tried to fight that it doesn't work. Let God play it out. Let him work it out. And that has really helped and I keep that in that little nugget you gave me in the back of my mind through a lot of situations I think okay, this is something that God will have to work out I do not need to just sit and worry about it or try and fight my husband on it whatever you know, I God will work it out. So it I really appreciate you being a couple decades ahead of me in life and just being able to spur me on and help give me reassurance as well as a younger wife and mom. And another one definitely for me as my mom as well. She Oh my gosh, really is one of my heroes, especially as a mom. And she is kind of a longer story, but just I'll share briefly, my middle brother, I'm the youngest, I have two older brothers. And with my mom and dad, I also have a couple half siblings as well who grew up with my dad, but my middle brother full brother had health issues. And when he was seven, he needed a kidney transplant. And so my mom gave him a kidney. And he was in and out of the hospital with him, I believe, since he was one year old. So naturally, we spent a lot of time with my grandparents. But she was just always there always caring for him. Even after the transplant, I remember I mean, you know, twice a day medications, she would have to inject shots in him just so his body didn't reject the kidney. So she, not just with him, obviously, but with us just really displayed such a sacrificial love for her children. That made an amazing impact on me, as a mom, you know, because I just, I just saw that example that she laid out for me. And it helps give me the confidence to do motherhood. You know, because I saw her being so sacrificial, and constantly caring for us. And, you know, she worked a few jobs, to help support us financially, before she remarried. And so she, she really worked hard to make sure we were taken care of, and that we didn't feel too much of the burden of, you know, being from divorced parents and having to take care of us financially. So it it just really, she really showed so much sacrifice, that really made an impact on me. And I think that's why I you know, with my own children, I would do anything like I just, I would let them eat before I ate. Usually that happens. Or, like, in our case, kind of funny story. But if my if there weren't enough meatballs with the spaghetti dinner, I would surely happily give up my meatballs for my children, so they can have more like, you know, just those that are silly, but, but it's really true, you know, and just seeing the hard stuff that she had to go through. really helped give me strength that I can do hard things to. And so and even now, gosh, I mean, I'm constantly talking to her about, you know, motherhood. I tell I remember telling her. I don't remember you ever getting angry at us? I don't remember you yelling. I'm like, I really struggle with that. Sometimes I yell at my children, and I hate it. I tried to stop. And I'm like, I don't remember you doing that. And of course, she kind of jokes. She's like, Oh, I'm sure I did. You just don't remember that. Yeah, that gives me hope then. So hopefully my children won't remember that side of me.

## **Claudine**

Well, so far, we've learned that women are tough and sacrificial, right? And I was reading an article on women CEOs. And one of the things that said why women make great CEOs is they're tough because

they've had to overcome a lot. You know, women have had to develop a thick skin, especially in the business world. But they're also flexible. I mean, we can be we have to be really flexible. Especially if you're raising children, small children. I mean, you know, your time is not your own. And apparently neither are your meatballs. They're not your own either.

**Ashley**

Oh my makeup's not my own my clothes are not my own.

**Claudine**

Yeah, wait till she's a teenager. And you're like, Where's my blue sweater? Oh, I wore it my left it in Jane's. Like, oh my gosh, don't go.

**Ashley**

I did that to my mother all the time. Oh, yeah. And she would come in and find it on the floor. Sorry. Oh, but you know what's really funny, too, if she would buy shirts, or she would buy clothes without trying it on. So she would leave them in our closet have the tag on it, because she wasn't sure if she wanted to keep it or return it and I would borrow it. Wear it with the tag on. At least I left the tag on in case you wanted to return it.

**Claudine**

Oh my goodness. That's so funny. We're creative, right? Women are creative. That's true. My husband and I were watching a show last week and I don't even know what it was. Oh, I think it was This Is Us. But anyway, they were giving birth that was the episode where they were all giving birth. And my husband was like, I just cannot believe you did that. And I said yes, I did that three times. Thank you very much. So we are tough. I mean, our bodies are built to birth other human beings which is amazing. That's a gift that we have which in the very moment of it. Sometimes the pain doesn't feel very gift by it surely is one of the greatest gifts that I know you and I both been blessed to have his two birth children. Of course, my fourth is adopted and no different feelings there, I always joke that he was the planned one and the easy birth. Someone else did it for me.

**Ashley**

That's great.

**Claudine**

Not to scare any women out there if you haven't birth children yet, but there you have it.

**Ashley**

Very true. You know, one thing that I really loved, just in my learning about womanhood, again, especially it really just kind of I got faced with it, you know, when becoming a mom. But is that how the roles of men and women are not meant to compete, but complete. And so that was just something that really resonated with me that like we are all created in God's image. And so men and women together, complete the whole package, right, the wholeness of God. And so I just love that. Because sometimes we can feel like we need to compete with each other, or, and that could be even enrolls in a job. And sometimes at home and our own family, you know, like, well, who gets the final say, I had a conversation with a friend, and who was sharing, you know, in their marriage, it's kind of like, well, who has the better argument? Some people might say, well, the woman just needs to submit to the man, or, you know, it's different for every family. And I thought that was really interesting, because that was something they agree upon that their partners and whoever kind of has the either greater need, or the more information to kind of back their point, that they'll respect each other's, you know, decision, say, Okay, well, we'll do that, you know, and it doesn't necessarily have to be the man all the time, the man of the house. So it's really interesting, because sometimes we feel like we can compete. But we're supposed to celebrate the differences and that we both bring things to the table of value, you know, very valuable perspectives and personalities and gifts that we have made to complete, you know, the situation. So I really find that encouraging, because I'll be honest, sometimes I have kind of wrestled with the men versus the women thing. And a lot of it is because I have two older brothers who I love dearly, I have a son of a wonderful husband, I don't feel like well, I need to be superior over them. And sometimes I see even you see some little girls running around with T shirts that say women rule the world or girls rule the world, right? And I'm like, gosh, that kind of hurts my heart. Because what about my son? Like, you know, can't we all get together? Are we all together in this? And so I think that's where the understanding of roles versus the identity was really important.

**Claudine**

That is important. Yes, yes.

**Ashley**

Okay.

**Claudine**

Yeah, I was gonna say it's funny, you're talking about roles, because my husband I have in our marriage, we do different roles within our family that are not traditional. Like he took the kids to all their doctor's

appointments. Typically moms do that, right? He would clip their toenails or their fingernails when they were babies, because that terrified me. He would take him to the park to play because again, playground equipment terrifies me. So that's why we actually took our grandson to the beach last week, and there was playground equipment on the sand. And I just, I felt all those feelings flood back from 20-25 years ago, and my kids were little and I realized I still don't like playground equipment. It just really stresses me out. But anyway.

**Ashley**

That is very fascinating. I never I never knew that about you.

**Claudine**

Totally stresses me out. I think it's because when I was little I watched Kramer versus Kramer and the little boy fell off the playground equipment had to go the hospital. I don't know I was young when I saw that. I may be remembering the details wrong. But playground equipment scares me with little children. So.

**Ashley**

They are from the devil.

**Claudine**

I don't think so. But anyway, but then on the other hand, I do all our finances, even for our business. I do all the payroll and the profit and losses I do anything regarding our finances, pretty much I handle, I obviously review everything with him and I don't make any decisions without his input. It's funny that we both took on different roles that would traditionally be placed, you know, under the woman or the man or the wife or the husband. But like he said, We agreed upon it. It was something we had discussed. And we said, You know what, I'm better at this. You're better at this, this stresses me out. This stresses me out. So and we've had this beautiful arrangement where we play to our strengths. Power Trip, you know, cause overseeing the money is you share often on the podcast your husband does. But it can be a power trip, you know, if you control the purse strings, it can be very much so. And sometimes I mean, he does have to ask me sometimes like, Can I spend data on this? And I'm like, Yeah, but use this account. So he, he's very respectful but I don't use it as a power trip, it's just, I'm the one that knows what's in every account. So.

**Ashley**

You're guilty with that ability.

## **Claudine**

I'm gifted with that ability, although as I age, it's getting harder and harder to juggle. But anyway, it's it is a balance. But I know for myself, ever since I was young, I was just always grateful to be a girl and then a woman, I never felt undervalued. And for that I'm really grateful to my mom, my teachers, I had some amazing teachers in school and obviously going to a private girls school where women were elevated and educated and encouraged and inspired to reach for great heights in their life. And, you know, I feel like I always had every opportunity available to meet whether it's true or not, I always believe that and so it's I've never felt held back because of my gender. And for that I'm grateful. But then I also have the beauty of not having the you know, all the responsibilities. I mean, I look at my husband, and I think God, he's a Christian, because he has God is his strength. But I really wouldn't want to have that role. Like he's been our provider. He's been our leader, many things he is and done a great job at it. But I think that would stress me out too. I like being the support. I like being the right hand, it doesn't diminish my value or my identity in any way. But I have just always been grateful for my role. My identity.

## **Ashley**

Well, and exactly, you know, depending on what you want to do in life, depending on you know, like when thinking about my 10 year old daughter, well, what do you want to do when you grow up? You know, I mean, we always ask kids, what do you want to be when you grow up, and there's such dreamers, and they can, they can do anything they put their mind to, and they work hard for and that is right for them. And that they're gifted it, you know, they have skills and abilities and gifts and talents. And, you know, we want to foster that and thinking about, you know, raising a daughter, we want her to be strong, we want her to be confident, we want her to be respectful, and considerate, and God fearing, and you know, God loving and right, love others and, you know, just outwardly focused and all these different things. And but that comes from God, you know, we could encourage that. It doesn't come, we don't get those things. As you know, our listeners have learned anything from this podcast. Happiness does not necessarily come from success, it does not right from the nice house, or the nice car or the living the quote, unquote, dream life. That's not where it comes from, you know, it's within, and it's being authentic, and it's being who you are called to be, and who God made you to be. And so that's the identity. I think if there's anything I would want young girls to learn, it's know who you are, the younger you can figure that out, the better. I mean, granted, it's ever evolving. But one thing that I did not do is I wasn't secure. And I didn't really know who I was in my identity before I got married and had children. So I struggled. Because then that's why I kind of joke why I had to kind of figure out, you know, what is womanhood? Who am I? What's, what's my identity, and the sooner you can start focusing on that you can feel that strength and that confidence and know who you are, and know what roles God will call you to that you are made to fill. You know, maybe you're not meant to be the stay at home mom, maybe you are going to be the CEO maybe you know, that's, that's variable that's depending on you. And God, you know, the dreams that you have and what God is calling you to where it's a great fit for you but who you are, and your core is your identity. And that is where that power and that strength come from, you know, and then really when you're secure in that you can do amazing things.

## **Claudine**

Yeah, you know, so true. It's funny, you brought that up, because when I was in my 20s, I had two of my children early in my 20s. And I remember when we start going to church, I had an amazing mentor. Her name was Marshall Lam. And I really wrestled with wanting to work and have a corporate job and just move up the ladder. I just felt like staying home and doing dishes and doing laundry was just not what I wanted to do with my life. And I felt like that's what motherhood was. I had a very, very distinct version of motherhood, my in my 20s, of course, was still young and pretty selfish. And I remember having a talk with her. And she really inspired me that women that choose to stay home, of course, it is a choice. And some women don't have that choice. But I at the time did have that choice to do that came with some financial sacrifices. But we did make the decision that one of us would stay home to be with our children as best as possible. But she really taught me the value of setting the temperature for the home, and really how we could move things just from being home, we could really move things forward with our children, with our husbands with our ministries. And it was a great lesson to learn early on, it really changed my view of staying home and being a stay at home mom, which I was for many, many years, I still work part time all the time. But I elevated the way I saw mom staying home. I know for so many women. That's what they dream to do. And they're not able to do in some women really want a job. And you know, they have to wrestle between do I stay home and be a good mom, you know, or go have a job and have less time, probably to a certain extent, it probably would have been better for me in my early years to have a job because I was just overwhelmed for years, just overwhelmed mothering, especially when I had four of them. It was just over my head. But anyway, we made it through and they still love me and I love them. So that's good. But it's amazing to have these women that have just impacted and helped me change my views on things to have a more spiritual or godly perspective, or just find that gratitude and find my identity that being home and doing dishes and laundry wasn't a lesser than and again, that went against everything I learned I felt less than by staying home. and ended up of course, I made that decision. And then through the years that went by, we felt so blessed and so grateful. And my oldest daughter who has two children has made the decision to be a stay home mom and forego you know, a career and outside of the home because being a mom is the greatest career there is. But there are financial sacrifices to that. But I'm so proud of her because she and her husband have made that decision together. And she really gets it like she gets it with these little ones which I didn't get into. I was much much older. She already gets it. And so I'm so grateful for that. That whatever role you have if you're a career woman or stay home, Mom, it's valuable. Either way, it's valuable.

## **Ashley**

Oh, absolutely.

**Claudine**

All right, ladies. Well, I hope you've enjoyed us discussing our roles and our views on women and just really relishing in the fact that as women, we are strong. We are courageous. We're overcomers we are nurturers, we are creative. We are all things amazing. And a little quote here so we remember to pass it on but it says Behind every successful woman is a tribe of other successful women who have her back. So listeners We are here for you. We hope you feel we have your back in some way and that you got a little nugget of encouragement today. Until next time.

**Ashley**

Alright everyone, thank you for joining in on our conversation here on the Rise Up and Shine podcast. If you haven't already, please take a second to hit that subscribe so you'll never miss an episode and while you're at it, share this episode with a friend who you know it can bless today. If you wanna visit us as well on our websites, you can catch Claudine over at [claudinesweeney.com](http://claudinesweeney.com) and Ashley at [mindoverchaos.com](http://mindoverchaos.com) our links are at the description. We also have some free resources there for you as well. So remember ladies, no matter what you are facing in life, it is never too late to rise up and shine and live your best life.