The sticky cookies of biblical womanhood

Suzanne van Geuns

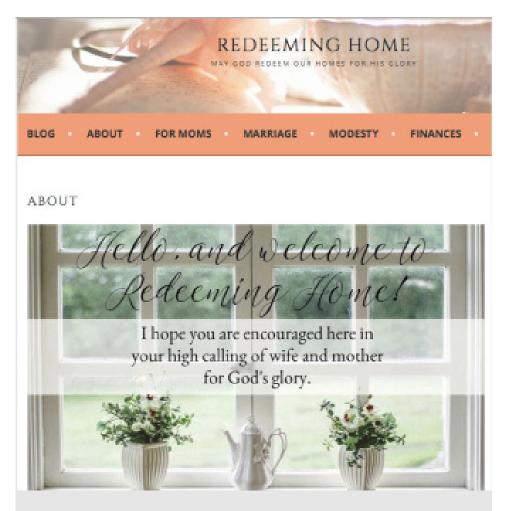
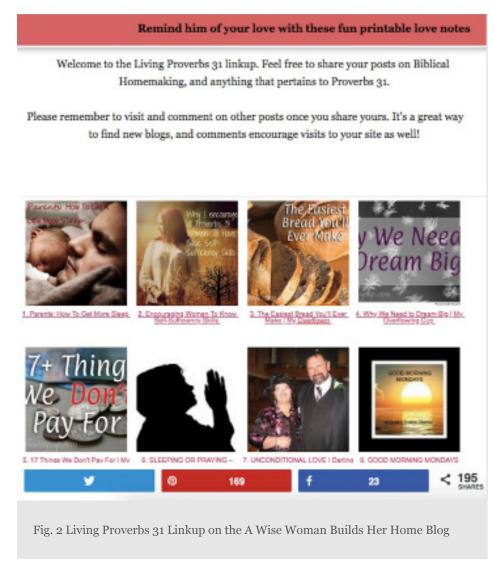
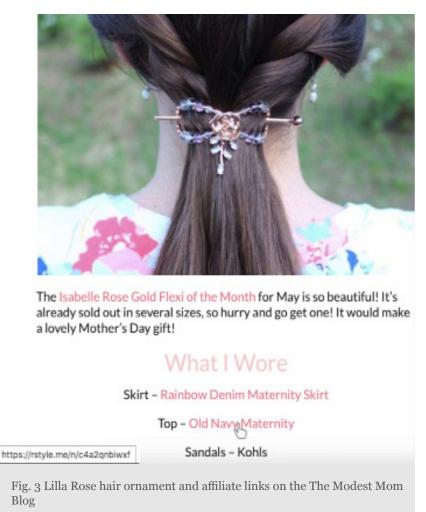


Fig. 1 Homepage of the Redeeming Home Blog

¹ Biblical womanhood blogs often resemble the idealized Christian home they encourage women to build. Decorated with flowers and calligraphy, the hyperfeminine domestic domain becomes a stronghold for conservative Protestant readings of the Bible and a shelter from feminist influence. Set apart but never isolated, these sanctuaries encourage by way of connection.



² Early biblical womanhood bloggers created networks through "link-up parties." The hosting blogger makes a "party" post and calls on others to add their links below. The multitude of squares in the resulting patchwork underlines that every oasis has neighbors who are to be invited in.



3 Businesses have long recognized the potential for profit in networked domesticity. Companies like Lilla Rose mirror 1950s Tupperware parties, offering bloggers a commission on the hair accessories they sell as "stylists" and "representatives." This model depends on visibility, but biblical womanhood blogs also monetize contact less obviously, through infrastructures of affiliation.

An "affiliate" link to Old Navy Maternity, for example, seems to just lead to the clothing website. But when hovering a cursor over such a link, the bottom left corner of the internet browser displays an "R-Style" URL rather than the Old Navy URL that will show in the address bar once the new tab opens. Bloggers who affiliate with R-Style make links to all merchants associated with R-Style run through an infrastructure that "sticks" code to site visitors. When these site visitors then go to a merchant's website and buy something, the blogger receives a percentage of their purchases' costs—no matter what or when they buy.

In a strikingly domestic metaphor, the "sticky" code that makes it possible to mark and track visitors is called a "cookie." Only visible in glimpses, cookies are steadfastly served alongside blogs' ornamental tea cups and Bible verses.

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	EMAIL	Sign up now!
Fig 4 Info	ormation about affiliate links on t	he Raising Arrows blog

⁴ Skillfully choosing and combining affiliations, biblical womanhood bloggers show their readers how to put the (online) home at the heart of overlapping systems of circulation. Hold fast to the truth and stay with what you love, they write. The encouragement will be in the affiliation.

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