

"The Invaluable Woman of God"

Lessons from the Proverbs 31 Woman

Invaluable= Having Incalculable Worth

In Proverbs 31 the mother of King Lemuel asks the question, "Who can find a virtuous wife?" We may ask what is a virtuous wife? She continues to tell as she describes a wonderful woman whose *worth is far above rubies*. In other words, this virtuous wife is a woman of virtue who is truly invaluable, priceless, a treasured possession. She is compared to a ruby, so we can say she is a real "jewel", a priceless treasure!

This study of the Proverbs 31 woman will surely create in us a desire to be this type of woman, married or not! At times it may seem intimidating, because frankly our "self" can get in the way. However, we will find that this woman's character is one that is really the fruit of the Holy Spirit working in us! Remember, you are a born again woman of God and the Spirit of the Lord, the Holy Spirit, is dwelling in you! With God, All things are possible!

Being a virtuous wife is an area of life that any woman, married or single, needs to be working on. Because married or single, we belong to the Lord, and therefore as the bride of Christ, it ought to be our aim to be *a virtuous wife, whose worth is far above rubies!*

Day 1

Before you begin your study, take a few moments to settle yourself and pray. Ask the Lord to teach you what it means to be a *virtuous woman* and to reveal to your heart any areas that you may need to surrender to Him. Please enter into this study of Proverbs 31 with a teachable heart that God can speak to, and in turn allow Him to make your life one that can be a "pattern of good works" as described in Titus.

1. Read Isaiah 54:4-6. Write out verse 5 here.

2. How can these verses be personal to you? How do they speak to your heart today?

"...And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you." Isaiah 62:5

3. Whether or not you have an earthly husband, you are a bride, the bride of Christ! He covers your life and is truly the Lover of your soul! Why would this verse be comforting to those who are married to an unbelieving spouse, or those who are waiting on the Lord for the husband He is bringing?

Read the following portion of Proverbs 31 and underline, circle, highlight any word or phrase that you think describes the a "virtuous wife".

Proverbs 31:10-31

10 Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. 11 The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain. 12 She does him good and not evil All the days of her life. 13 She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands. 14 She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar. 15 She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants. 16 She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard. 17 She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms. 18 She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night. 19 She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle. 20 She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. 21 She is not afraid of snow for her household, For all her household is clothed with scarlet. 22 She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple. 23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land. 24 She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants. 25 Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come. 26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness. 27 She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her: 29 "Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all." 30 Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised. 31 Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates.

The definition of "Virtuous" sheds light on what a virtuous wife is. The word in the Hebrew is "*chayil*" which is also the word used to describe a man of valor. The word means "*power, force, might; to show oneself strong, to be upright and to have integrity.*"

4. Considering this definition of "Virtuous", in your own words, describe what a virtuous woman is like?
5. Now focusing on verses 10-12, 23 and 28, we see qualities that relate to this role of "wife", what are they?
 - a. These are character qualities we all should be pursuing! If you are single or married, consider

yourself as the bride of Christ now, are these qualities found in your life in relation to your walk with the Lord? Are there areas that you would like to work on?

6. Read Genesis 2:18-24.

Seeing that God did not want Adam to be alone, why did God bring the woman to the man He created?

Consider this truth, the woman is brought to help the man. Sometimes women can get that mixed up and think that God is going to bring them a man to help them, or to fit into their predetermined plan of how their life should play out. Have you, married or not, ever asked God to make you the helpmate your husband needs, or a helpmate that your future husband will require? Take the time today to pray about this.

This week's verse:

"Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised"
Proverbs 31:30

Day 2

The "S" words...Submission and Singleness

1. The blueprint for marriage can be found in Ephesians 5. Read verses 22-33. Summarize God's divine design for the marriage. What are God's instructions to the wives?

a. Define "submit":

b. Who are we submitting to ultimately (verse 22)?

2. What are some words that are the opposite of "submit"?

3. What do you think is the root cause of a person not being willing to submit?

Single women must consider the issue of submission as well, because if you are a rebellious person now it will only be multiplied in your marriage.

4. Read the following scriptures and share what they teach us about submission in other areas of our lives:

James 4:7

a. What does this verse reveal to you about if you do not submit to God, who are you really allowing to have control?

1 Peter 2:13

1 Peter 5:5

b. How can we "practice" submission in our lives now, married or not?

Note:

Obviously God would not require us to submit when someone is asking us to join in sinful activity, or to submit to any form of abuse. If this is a situation in your life, please talk to one of the leaders in the Women's ministry, or make an appointment to meet with a pastor for additional counsel. The Lord would have you come for healing and restoration and dealing with abuse is not something one must face on their own so please seek counsel and help.

5. As you have read these verses on "submission", has your heart been convicted in any area that you have not been "*submitting to God, and resisting the devil*" in?

Take the time right now to pray and submit your will to God and seek His help in this area of submission. Do not allow the devil to have any way in your life or marriage!

"All the Single Ladies!"

4. There are obviously differences between a married woman and an unmarried woman and the lives they live. Read 1 Corinthians 7:32-35 and explain what those differences might be.

A married woman has a divided focus and that is the way it should be, she still cares for the will of God, but also needs to meet the needs of her husband. She is to be his "helpmate" (Genesis 2:18). An unmarried woman can serve the Lord with "singleness" of mind, there is a freedom she has because she doesn't have the obligation of pleasing a husband. Being married is not a bad thing, especially when marriage is done God's way, because God desires to bring two people together to make them one. The two become one and continue to serve the Lord together. However, there is a season for both in most women's lives; to be single, living wholeheartedly to please God; and to be married, becoming joined as one and to be a helpmate to your husband, as you serve God together as one.

5. As a single woman, what are some examples of things you can do now, that you might not be able to do later? (Married women, please share your thoughts or experiences as well.)

6. Queen Esther is a beautiful example of two seasons of a woman's life and the choice to honor God in her life. Consider this as you think of Esther, she was not raised by the perfect Godly mother in the perfect Godly home. Read Esther 2:7, describe Esther's situation.

- a. Maybe you or someone you know has had a similar childhood with one or both parents absent. What does Psalm 27:10 reveal as a promise we can hold on to?

7. Read Esther 2:5-8

The Word of God does not reveal Esther's emotions about her situation. Consider this, both parent's dead, she did not have a motherly example to follow after or a father to protect her; she was exiled from her own country and taken into captivity. Then she was taken from the only relative she had. What types of emotions do you think Esther experienced with all these trials?

a. Now consider a modern day woman who may have a life with similarities to Esther's life. Describe the fears, temptations or sins that could keep her from experiencing all that God wants her to be.

8. Through all of Esther's hardships, she remained an excellent, virtuous woman. What do the following verses reveal about her?

Esther 2:2

Esther 2:7

Esther 2:10 & 20

Esther 2:15

Esther 2:17

Look back to our verses from Proverbs 31. Which verses do you see evident in Esther's life?

This week's verse:

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Proverbs 31:30

Day 4

1. The Word of God admonishes older women to teach younger women how to be Godly women.
Read Titus 2:3-5, what 7 things are the older women to teach?

The word "discreet" means: *safe, sound in mind, self controlled, moderate as to opinion or passion, and temperate.*

Day 5

Being an *excellent woman* is really the result of living a Spirit-filled life! The Fruit of the Spirit described in Galatians 5:22-23 are familiar to most Christians. Read these verses and describe how each of these fruits would result in you becoming a more Godly woman, whether you are married or not? Give examples.

Love-

Joy-

Peace-

Patience/Longsuffering-

Kindness-

Goodness-

Faithfulness-

Gentleness-

Self-control-

Life Application

Take a few moments to review this week's lesson and the things that God has been showing you.

Proverbs 19:21 *"There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless, the Lord's counsel--that will stand."*

Married Girls:

If you are married, prayerfully ask the Lord for His counsel on how you might be a "more excellent wife" to your husband. Take time to listen, even if you already know the answer. What are some things you can do to show your husband you honor and respect him, whether you think he deserves it or not? Maybe there is something that you can do to bless your husband, "just because". Be creative, do something unexpected! Write those things down here and if possible, share with your group.

Single Girls:

If you are not yet married, and it is your desire to be married, it is the time in your life now that you should be preparing to be the perfect "helpmate." Or maybe you have no desire to marry, but remember you are still a woman that God wants to be a woman of virtue! You represent Him in your workplace, your school, wherever you go! As we read in the lesson from the first day, we are the bride of Christ. So either way with this in mind, what are some areas in your life that you need to start practicing so that you might be an "excellent" woman of God? Examine yourself, are you focused on becoming a "helper" that will be suitable for the godly man that God is preparing for you? What are some practical things you can be doing now to prepare yourself? Write your answers and thoughts down here and if possible, share with your group.

Write out this week's verse: