

Get Smart: Wisdom for Life From Proverbs **Discussion 7: “The Proverbs 31 Woman”**

SPECIAL NOTE:

This discussion is written specifically for WOMEN. There is a corresponding discussion for MEN called “The Proverbs Man.”

Summary/Overview:

Some people have the mistaken idea that the ideal woman in the Bible is retiring, servile, and entirely domestic. This is not accurate! The woman in Proverbs 31 is a manufacturer, importer, manager, realtor, farmer, seamstress, upholsterer, and merchant. Her strength and dignity do not come from her amazing achievements; they are a result of her reverence for God. Her beauty comes entirely from her character.

Reminder:

This is a guide. Adjust the content used based on the needs of your group.

- I. Group Welcome/Icebreaker, if needed (Suggested Time: 3-5 min.)**
- II. Life Sharing (Suggested Time: 10-15 min.)**
- III. DNA Journal Sharing (Suggested Time: 3-5 min.)**
Allow people to share about what God is speaking to them through their daily reading using their DNA Journal.
- IV. DVD Discussion Introduction (Approximately 20-25 min.)**
Open in prayer.

Play “Get Smart” DVD
- V. Discussion (Suggested Time: 30-45 min.)**

What stood out to you from the DVD?

We are living in a day of shifting values about women. Proverbs 31 presents a picture of a wife who is anything but passive, underproductive, and unappreciated. Here we see a woman of extraordinary skill, great drive, and expansive involvement who is valued by her husband and known in the community for her achievements and stature.

- Why do you suppose there is not a chapter in Proverbs on a “husband of noble character?”
- Do you think anything in this chapter could also apply to husbands? Explain.

- If you were going to write an equivalent chapter of Proverbs for the godly man, what would you put into it?

Read: Proverbs 31:1-9

- What safeguards should we employ to keep our lives morally pure?
- What were the concerns that were addressed in **verse 1-5**?
- What advice does Lemuel’s mother give him in **verse 8-9**?
- According to **Prov. 2:16-19; 5:3-23; 7:5-27; and 9:13-18**, what results occur when we ignore the advice of Lemuel’s mother?

Notice that in **Proverbs 31:1**, the mother is essentially asking, “What can I say to you?” Notice that “what” appears 3 times (in NKJV) and seems to imply her deep concern that she gives the appropriate counsel. She desired to have the mind of Christ concerning these important words that she endeavored to impress on his young heart.

The influence of a God-fearing mother is immeasurable. As Christian parents, we must bring our children before the Lord in prayer. It is important to seek divine wisdom and bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Read: Proverbs 31:10-21

- According to **verse 11**, why is this woman so valuable?
- What are the results of her trustworthiness?
- This woman is capable. She works as hard as she can. What things does she do according to **verse 13-16 and verse 19**?

Virtuous is used in the sense of thrifty and devoted. She is a dependable woman who can be counted on in an emergency. She is capable and energetic, with a high sense of dignity and the importance of administering the affairs of her home. She is a woman of character, strength, great wisdom, many skills, and tremendous compassion.

A husband’s heart may safely confide in this wife. In her love and unselfish affection he finds a faithful helpmate who brings him good and not harm. Through diligence and economy she watches over the comfort of her own family and is a blessing to those around her.

We see that she finds her deepest joy in loving service and does not mind working. She is a woman of strength and stamina who takes joy in performing her daily tasks. This woman’s hands may be busy with her work, but she is willing to stretch them out to the needy as well.

Read: Proverbs 31:22-27

- How does she help her community according to **verses 20, 26, and 27**?
- What are some ways the church can reach out to the poor and needy in our communities?
- What clothes the virtuous woman beside her garments?

In **verse 22** it describes her clothes as being of the finest quality. She brought beauty and luxury to her family. Clearly, she enhances her husband's prestige rather than overshadowing him. Although her literal wardrobe is impressive, she is clothed more regally with strength and dignity.

The virtuous woman who is faithful in ministering at home and clothes herself in a garment of practical godliness and righteousness will have more than enough to spare for the blessings of others. Even though the days to come may be uncertain, she has no fear of the future because she has the character to face them with confidence.

“Clothed” with something in the Bible means that it is part of your life and reveals itself in your character and conduct. This wife can laugh at her future problems and troubles because she has strength of character, uprightness of heart, and gracious dignity. She is joyful and prepared for emergencies. (**Nehemiah 8:10 – “The joy of the Lord is your strength.”**)

Verse 26 shows that the words of the virtuous woman are gracious. She opens her mouth in wisdom, and the law of kindness is on her tongue. Through her well-directed wisdom and tenderness, the hearers of her words are edified and refreshed.

Read: Proverbs 28-31

- How does Proverbs say that the virtuous woman is honored?
- Name some ways you can demonstrate godly character in your life.
- How can you cultivate a healthy atmosphere in your home?

In **Proverbs 31**, we see how this woman's positive approach and zest for life inspire her husband and her children to echo her praise. He tells her that she is the best! Charm can be deceptive, and beauty eventually fades, but godly character counts the most.

In summary...

Proverbs began with a call to fear the Lord (**1:7**), and it is fitting that it closes with a picture of a woman who fulfills this command.

We can learn from the industry, integrity, and resourcefulness of the **Proverbs 31** virtuous woman. Her character comes from her fear – her reverence for God.

Her qualities are mentioned throughout the book: hard work, fear of God, respect for her spouse, foresight, encouragement, care for others, concern for the poor, and wisdom in handling money. The qualities, when coupled with fear of God, lead to enjoyment, success, honor, and worth. Proverbs is a very practical book of the Bible for us because it shows us how to become wise, make good decisions, and live according to God's ideals.

The virtuous woman has her priorities right with the Lord:

- 1) She nourishes her personal relationship with God (**Matthew 6:33**)
- 2) She ministers to her husband (**Proverbs 18:22; 19:14**)
- 3) She nurtures her children (**II Timothy 1:5**)
- 4) She keeps her home (**Titus 2:5**)

She then adds whatever other activities time and energy permit.

Discuss any insights or words of advice you have studied in **Proverbs 31** that might be helpful in your life.

A "Wise" Suggestion: There are 31 chapters in Proverbs. Read one chapter of Proverbs each day for the corresponding date (i.e. on June 4, read Proverbs 4, etc.).

VI. Prayer (Suggested Time: 10-15 min.)

Pray for any issues related to the discussion.

Pray for any personal needs.

VII. Important Church Announcement (Suggested Time: 2-3 min.)

Encourage your Life Group members to participate in the upcoming opportunities and events at The Cause.