

# Finding Honor

August 16, 2020

## Proverbs 31:10-16,23-31

One of the most important decisions a person will make in life is the choice of their spouse. According to the One who designed marriage, marriage is to be a lifelong commitment. Choosing a spouse is not a matter to be taken lightly.

Unfortunately, we live during a time when the idea of marriage has fallen on hard times. Marriage has been redefined by our culture. Almost any combination of people can now be considered a legitimate marriage.

Our text is found in Proverbs 31 and written by King Lemuel is recalling the words and wisdom of his mother. We do not know who he was, but his mother wanted her son to have a spouse that truly honored God. While the outward beauty of a woman can entice a man, she wanted her son to be moved by another type of beauty. But for one to find true happiness, joy, and fulfillment in their marriage, they must look for the hidden beauty of the heart, where love for God is found.

The portrait in Proverbs 31 centers on the wife, yet it provides all of us with a framework for the character to be cultivated as she submits her life to the Lord. This portrait of a godly wife should inform not just wives, but women in general and all of us who seek to live lives that honor Christ.

There is honor and recognition for this woman, because her character is proven and her foundation secure in the Lord. Do we honor and celebrate the same things as God? Do we overlook what God values because we have been influenced by what the world values? *[excerpts from Travis Biller]*

### **Commitment To Her Husband** (Proverbs 31:10-12) *[background 31:1-9]*

- King Lemuel (identity unknown) repeats wisdom from his mother (vs. 31:2-9):
    - Avoid the temptation to use his power to engage in immorality;
    - Staying sober would serve him well;
    - *To use his power to speak-up for powerless people.*
  - Then Lemuel offers a beautiful poem about a wife of noble character.
  - Recognizing the virtues of a wife, a man considers himself most fortunate.
    - Her virtuous traits produce a woman of impeccable excellence.
    - She is more precious than the finest gems (rubies). She is priceless.
  - Ruth served as an example of a woman of distinguished character.
    - Boaz used the same term “Virtuous” to describe her.
  - A noble wife’s devotion to her husband has a lasting effect on him.
    - His heart (where decisions are made) fully trusts in her.
    - He is assured that her keen understanding will lead to good.
    - He has complete faith in her, he depends on her.
    - He knows she will never bring evil into their home or marriage.
  - The husband of a noble woman enjoys what she brings into his life.
    - She can be counted on to be a blessing to her husband and family.
- **How does our personality reflect that we are created in God’s image?**
- **In our church, who comes to mind when you think about these verses?**



### **Wise In Her Work** (Proverbs 31:13-16)

- In Solomon's day (and even today) a woman earned a reputation of noble character by staying busy with projects that benefit her family.
- To clothe her family she worked with her hands to make thread and then weave fabric, then make clothes.
  - Clumps of Wool (from sheep) and strands of Flax (from plants) was turned into thread.
  - She did not waste her time.
- When Solomon was king, he extended the reach of Israel by building a fleet of ships to trade (commerce) with foreign lands.
  - Lemuel says the industrious wife is like those merchant ships bringing supplies from afar.
    - She provided food from the farthest places to meet her family's needs.
- Solomon warned God's people to abhor laziness and to embrace industry (Prov. 6:6-11).
  - A woman of noble character would rise before sunrise to prepare the first meal of the day.
    - Not only providing for her family, but for her servants as well.
  - She would plan her work and instruct her servants on the tasks of the day.
    - Time was not wasted because they were properly nourished and instructed.
- Her business savvy was such that she could prudently evaluate and purchase land. Then she directed a vineyard to be planted for the long-term benefit of the family.

➤ **What are some ways you demonstrate prudence as you make choices for your family?**

### **Sure In Her Reputation** (Proverbs 31:23-27)

- Lemuel continues the description of the virtuous woman...
- Because of her industry and reputation, she enhanced her husband's reputation.
  - The city gate was the place where men conducted business and attended to legal matters.
  - Because of her, the husband would be considered one of the wise elders of the city.
- The quality of the linens and belts (girdles) she made were highly desired by merchants.
- Her attire is more than clothing, she also wears the traits of strength and honor.
  - Because of her character and attention to detail, the future does not frighten her.
  - She shall rejoice in the time to come. She can confidently handle challenges.
- She is eager to share God's wisdom with others and seeks to grow in God's wisdom herself.

➤ **How does our reputation influence other people's attitudes toward Christ?**

### **Honored Through Fearing God** (Proverbs 31:28-31)

- ***"Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her"***
  - Respect comes to her from that people she works with and from her family.
    - She knows not only joy but considers herself blessed. She is content.
- The honor she receives comes from the way she honors the Lord.
  - Charm can be deceitful. Beauty can be vain. But, the fear of the Lord brings her praise.
- Her excellent example provides Christians with the wise path to living in a way that honors God.

➤ **Do you take the time to honor those who live for God?**

**Biblical Truth: God recognizes those who faithfully demonstrate His wisdom in their lives.**

