

MESSAGE TITLE: Wisdom for Your Home

SCRIPTURE: Proverbs 28:26 and Proverbs 31:10-31

KEY TRUTH: *Because many of the issues we face in our relationships require wisdom, we will spend time studying wise practices from God's Word.*

GETTING STARTED

Wisdom is the capacity to understand how to apply God's Word to life. We all need wisdom, especially when navigating relationships with family and friends. Today, we will continue to examine how wisdom principles from the Bible can be applied to our relationships for God's glory and our good. We will especially focus on Proverbs 31, a passage that describes the noble woman of character.

OBSERVATION

Read Proverbs 28:26.

Does this verse discourage believers from thinking critically about the issues they face in life? If not, then what does the author mean here?

What's the difference between trusting one's own mind and walking in wisdom?

What does this verse promise to those who walk in wisdom? Delivered from what or whom?

Read Proverbs 31:10-31.

What type of wife and woman is described in these verses? Can you think of someone who has come close to modeling this for you? What did you learn from her?

This passage paints such a lofty picture of excellence that it can be depressing to godly women today. How can believing women find hope and encouragement in this passage? How does Proverbs 31 square with God's desire to bring us joy, peace and hope (Romans 15:13)?

Re-read verse 30. How do you raise your children with respect to these verses? How can you help your daughters become this type of woman? How can you help your sons admire and seek this type of woman?

Is the woman described here the type of woman our culture values? What values does this woman embody? Why or why not? How do we pray against the competing images culture puts forward?

Proverbs 31 describes a strong, beautiful, and God-fearing woman—the type of woman we should hope our sons desire and marry. Only God, through the power of the Holy Spirit, can transform women into this ideal. And, in fact, He's at work in the lives of all believers, both men and women, to lovingly mold them into the image of Jesus. Cultural ideals of beauty will change over time. The lasting beauty we see in these verses will never fade.

APPLICATION

How could anyone become like the ideal woman described in Proverbs 31:10-31? Is she a symbol for some spiritual quality, an ideal to strive for or the culmination of all the wisdom principles described in the book of Proverbs?

How does this biblical image of a woman who 'does it all' compare with your image of a woman today who 'does it all'? What are the differences? What are the similarities? How can women today follow her example without wearing themselves out and compromising their roles as wife and mother?

How does the Gospel inform our understanding and application of this passage?

For both men and women: What is Jesus saying to you personally from Proverbs 31?

PRAYER

For married couples: Thank God for designing marriage to be a demonstration of the Gospel. Take some time to pray for the future or already present spouses of the children represented in your group. Ask for God to make your children into men and women who honor Him with their lives. Pray for them to value the type of marriage God desires.

For single adults: Take some time to pray that the virtues described in Proverbs 31 will saturate your relationships with neighbors, co-workers, friends and family members for the sake of the Gospel. Ask that God will use your singleness to help spread the Gospel in communities and across the world.

SHARE POINT

Read and review the application questions. Share with someone in your life how God's Word is changing you into a growing disciple. Encourage that person to do the same. That person could be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor.

COMMENTARY NOTES

Proverbs 28:26

The word 'delivered' means to escape judgment. This implies that the object of a fool's trust, including his own schemes and plans, cannot save Him. Only following God's wise ways can save a person from harm and judgment.

Proverbs 31:10-31

This wisdom poem is an acrostic, in which each verse begins with the successive letter of the Hebrew alphabet. The poem begins and ends with mention of the woman's excellence. The probable intention with putting this together with the acrostic pattern is to show that this woman's character runs the whole range of excellence. The woman is married, as was the custom and expectation in that culture. She devoted herself to the wellbeing of her household, to which she contributes by her participation in outside economic concerns. At the same time, she makes her home the center of ministry by giving generously to the poor and by instructing her children and household workers in true kindness. So, her husband and children enjoy their lot and honor her for her industry. This lofty portrait of excellence sets such a high standard that it can be

depressing for godly women today until its purpose is understood. First, the woman embodies, in all areas of life, the full character of wisdom commended throughout this book. This shows that even though the concrete situations up to now have generally envisioned a cast of males, the teaching of the entire book is intended for all of God's people. Second, as with other character types, this profile is an ideal; a particular example of full-scale virtue and wisdom toward which the faithful are willing to be molded. It is not expected that any one woman will look exactly like this in every respect.

SOURCES CONSULTED

ESV Study Bible

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, New Testament

Serendipity Bible for Groups, Four Edition