

The Virtuous Woman

A. God values character above beauty.

Character = moral or ethical strength, integrity, fortitude, reputation

“Don’t judge by his appearance or height, for I have rejected him. The LORD doesn’t see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” 1 Samuel 16:7 (NLT)

Life Application: We should value character above beauty.

“Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? She is more precious than rubies... Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last; but a woman who fears the LORD will be greatly praised.” Proverbs 31:10,30 (NLT)

“What matters is not your outer appearance—the styling of your hair, the jewelry you wear, the cut of your clothes— but your inner disposition. Cultivate inner beauty, the gentle, gracious kind that God delights in. The holy women of old were beautiful before God that way, and were good, loyal wives to their husbands.”

1 Peter 3:3-5 (MSG)

B. Five characteristics of a virtuous woman.

1. She brings good to her husband.

“Her husband can trust her, and she will greatly enrich his life. She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life... Her husband is well known at the city gates, where he sits with the other civic leaders.”
Proverbs 31:11-12,23 (NLT)

Note: This is especially important if the husband does not believe in Jesus.

“Be good wives to your husbands, responsive to their needs. There are husbands who, indifferent as they are to any words about God, will be captivated by your life of holy beauty.” 1 Peter 3:1-2 (MSG)

2. She works hard.

“She finds wool and flax and busily spins it. She is like a merchant’s ship, bringing her food from afar... She goes to inspect a field and buys it; with her earnings she plants a vineyard. She is energetic and strong, a hard worker. She makes sure her dealings are profitable; her lamp burns late into the night. Her hands are busy spinning thread, her fingers twisting fiber... She makes her own bedspreads. She dresses in fine linen and purple gowns... She makes belted linen garments and sashes to sell to the merchants... She carefully watches everything in her household and suffers nothing from laziness.”
Proverbs 31:13-14,16-19,22,24,27 (NLT)

“And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”
Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)

Warning!! Idleness makes us susceptible to temptation.

“...they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought not to.” 1 Timothy 5:13 (NIV)

3. She plans ahead

“She gets up before dawn to prepare breakfast for her household and plan the day’s work for her servant girls... She has no fear of winter for her household, for everyone has warm clothes... She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future.” Proverbs 31:15,21,25 (NLT)

“Commit your actions to the LORD, and your plans will succeed.” Proverbs 16:3 (NLT)

4. She helps poor and needy people.

“She extends a helping hand to the poor and opens her arms to the needy.” Proverbs 31:20 (NLT)

God’s interruptions = great opportunities

5. She gives wise counsel.

“When she speaks, her words are wise, and she gives instructions with kindness.” Proverbs 31:26 (NLT)

“Fear of the LORD is the foundation of wisdom. Knowledge of the Holy One results in good judgment.”
Proverbs 9:10 (NLT)

“My child, listen when your father corrects you. Don’t neglect your mother’s instruction. What you learn from them will crown you with grace and be a chain of honor around your neck.” Proverbs 1:8-9 (NLT)

Life Application for Mother’s Day: We need to celebrate our moms.

“Her children stand and bless her. Her husband praises her: ‘There are many virtuous and capable women in the world, but you surpass them all!’ Charm is deceptive, and beauty does not last; but a woman who fears the LORD will be greatly praised. Reward her for all she has done. Let her deeds publicly declare her praise.” Proverbs 31:28-31 (NLT)

C. What if I don’t feel as virtuous as the woman described in Proverbs 31?

Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls.” Matthew 11:28-29 (NLT)

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Discussion Questions

1. Read Proverbs 31:28-31. How did you celebrate your mom on Mother’s Day this year? Is it really necessary to make a big deal out of Mother’s day? Why? Why not?
2. Read Proverbs 31:10-27. What characteristics of the virtuous woman described in Proverbs 31 describe your mom? What do you admire most about your mom? What is your fondest memory of your mother while you were growing up?
3. Read Psalm 78:4-8 & 2 Timothy 1:5. What role do mothers play in the spiritual development of their kids? How did your mom influence you spiritually?
4. Do you pray for your mom? Does she pray for you? Spend some time listing items that moms need prayer about. As a group pray about these items for your mom and any mothers that may be in your group.
5. Discuss the following passage: “Some people curse their father and do not thank their mother. They are pure in their own eyes, but they are filthy and unwashed.” Proverbs 30:11-12 (NLT)
6. Bonus assignment: The description of a virtuous woman contained in Proverbs 31:10-31 was originally written as an alphabetical acronym in ancient Hebrew. Each of the 22 verses started with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet (ancient Hebrew had no vowels!). See if you can write an alphabetical description of your mom in 26 phrases, each beginning a letter of our alphabet.

For example:

- Always on time.
- Best cook in the county.
- Continuously thinking of others.
- Drives like a NASCAR champion.