

PROVERBS 31

ROAD MAP TO A LIFE WELL LIVED

Wednesday Night Bible Class Online

Brother P. J. Yarbrough

La Puente Church of Christ

Proverbs 31 is a collection of scriptures that serves as a model and guide for how to live the good life. Too often, we consign Proverbs 31 as a study for young boys and old women.

In our study, we plan to use Proverbs 31 as an opportunity for all Christians to grow, improve and mature in our daily Christian walk. It does not matter what our gender is, our age or where we are in our walk towards full Christian maturity; the wisdom contained in these verses of God's word can help us be more resilient and thrive right here and now.

After studying this passage with my family in March 2020, I haven't been able to "shake" what we discovered in this text. Consequently, I wanted to share what we learned.

According to Bible Scholars, Who Exactly Was King Lemuel?

1. There is not uniform agreement among bible scholars about King Lemuel's identity.
2. I have always assumed it was a encrypted name that Solomon gave himself to avoid having to refer to himself by name in his own writings.
3. Our salvation is secure, no matter Lemuel's...

1. Why do you suppose Solomon saved the contents of this chapter to close out his book of knowledge?

We can't be certain why Solomon saved this choice advice to close out his book of Proverbs. This is serious guidance and instruction for a king/leader in waiting. Proverbs 31 addresses key areas that can potentially bring down a king or anyone else that ignores these proverbs. **Continued...**

Proverbs 31 deals with the “fast track” of 3 negative actions that will ruin your life quick fast and in a hurry: 1) Living loosely (giving your strength to...) 2) Allowing alcohol and drugs to take over your life 3) and/or marrying the wrong (type of) person.

Proverbs 31: 2

What, my son? and what,
the son of my womb? and
what, the son of my vows?

2. Why do you believe the queen mother approached her son in the manner that she did in verse 2 and what can we learn from her approach?

Verse two seems to be a mother's longing to say just the right words to get her son's attention emotionally as she prepares to share some very important words. Continued...

APPLICATION: Sometimes a person needs to know how much you care before they can care about how much you know.

Colossians 4:6 - Let your speech always be gracious, **seasoned with salt**, so that you will have the right response for everyone.

ESV **Continued...**

APPLICATION:

Galatians 6:1- Brothers & Sisters, if anyone is overtaken in a fault, you who are spiritual should *restore him in a spirit of gentleness*. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. **ESV**

Proverbs 31: 3

Give not thy strength unto
women, nor thy ways to that
which destroyeth kings.

**3. Besides chasing women,
what are some other “ways”
that destroy kings/queens
(presidents, Christians, etc.)
not mentioned in verses 3-5?**

To me, the queen seemed to be saying to her son, if you are going to be a good *leader* then you *cannot* exhibit certain qualities and *should not* conduct yourself in certain *ways*.

The “*ways*” of a bad kings/leaders

1. Lack of Honesty, Integrity & Forthrightness

It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments.: 1 Samuel 15:11

2. Self-Centered

Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Philippians 2:3

The “*ways*” of a bad kings/leaders

3. Never Take Full Accountability/Responsibility
“If you make a vow to the Lord your God, you shall not delay fulfilling it, for the Lord your God will surely require it of you, and you will be guilty of sin. Deuteronomy 23:21
4. Consistently Seeks/Follows Bad Counsel
Jeroboam - And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee, saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy... 1 King 12

The “*ways*” of a bad kings/leaders

5. Lacks Vision Where there is no vision, the people perish: Proverbs 29:18

6. Self-Centered Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Philippians 2:3

Proverbs 31:4-5

4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:

5 Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.

4. The queen mother lists some reasons to stay away from intoxicants, what are some other reasons that you can think of besides those listed in verses 4-7?

Reasons to Stay Away From Intoxicants

1. It Can be a Stumbling Block For Others **It is better not to eat meat or (*drink wine or to do anything else*) that will cause your brother or sister to fall.** Romans 14:21
2. It Can Damage Our Influence **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.** Matthew 5:16

Reasons to Stay Away From Intoxicants

3. Intoxicants can lead to dependency and/or addiction. Those that engage in drunkenness, etc. will be lost forever.
Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards (addicts, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
4. Our Example Could Set Our Children Up For a Life of...**Alcohol is the gateway drug that no one ever really talks about.**

Reasons to Stay Away From Intoxicants

5. **Intoxicants can lead to arrest;** compromise our standard of living and damage our relationships.
6. **Intoxicants are win-lose.** Intoxicants induce a euphoria but also a depression after the euphoria inevitably wears off. Many use intoxicants to feel good or escape, but it actually makes us feel bad/worse in the short (hangover, etc.) and long term. Intoxicants often contribute to the ills they are consumed to cure...anxiety, worry, depression, despair, etc.

5. According to the queen, who should consume intoxicants and why? What is the lesson/message for us in 2021?

Who Should Use Intoxicants and Why According to the Queen?

1. No One! Unless you've given up on life.
2. The Point the Queen is Making is This...
 1. Those Who Have Given Up Hope, Depressed About Life and/or Trying to Escape Life's Problems, Often Turn to Intoxicants
 2. The Stress of the Pandemic Has Exacerbated the Situation

6. Based on verses 5-9 in Proverbs 31, what does it mean to “not be given to wine” (Titus 1:7) and what does that look like for church leaders (elders, etc.) and any other Christian?

We're not hear to trample on your liberties. Some claim the standard for consuming intoxicants is more stringent in the church than it actually is in the bible. But as we mature in Christ, the standards for elder/bishop and "ordinary" Christian standards for everything (not just intoxicants) should converge.

1 Timothy 3:2-3 A bishop (A mature Christian) then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous...not a novice...must have a good report of them which are without...

**What does it mean to
“not be given to red
meat”?**

****{Let's take the emotions of
alcohol out of the question and
substitute red meat instead.}**

Are You Given To Red Meat If You...

1. Eat red meat twice a day
2. Eat red meat twice a week
3. Eat red meat twice a month
4. Eat red meat twice year

Timothy 3:8 Likewise must the deacons (The mature Christian) be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre...

Aspire to deacon standard at least.

What does it mean
to “not be given to
much red meat”?

Are You Not Given To Much Red Meat If You...

1. Eat red meat twice a day
2. Eat red meat twice a week
3. Eat red meat twice a month
4. Eat red meat twice year

PROVERBS 31:8

8 Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.

**Who are the “dumb” and
“all such as are appointed
to destruction” mentioned
in verse 8?**

Where I grew up, the term “deaf and dumb” referred to those who could not speak. And so the queen mother is telling her son to speak up those that **don't have a voice** and those **who have no hope**.

PROVERBS 31:9

9 Open thy mouth, judge
righteously, and plead the
cause of the poor and needy.

**In verse 9, what does
it mean to “judge
righteously”?**

The queen mother is telling
her son to be fair & be
impartial, be empathetic,
be objective and be
compassionate as a leader.

This is not only “high moral” advice, it’s also practical advice for a stable and orderly kingdom.

Proverbs 31:10-12

10 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.

11 The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.

12 She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

**7. How would you
express verses 10-12 in
your own way with
contemporary speech?**

10. Who can find a good women?
You cannot accurately measure a
good women's value in monetary
terms. Her worth is incalculable in
quantitative measures.

11. Her husband knows that she has his back, front and both sides in any and every situation. With her on his side, he knows that no matter what, they can make it through anything.

12. He knows that she will always look out for his best interests every day that she is a part of his life.

Proverbs 31:13-15

13 She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.

14 She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar.

15 She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.

8. Expand the application of verses 13-15 so that the theme/idea, if not the specific actions mentioned, can be applied in our lives today.

In my opinion, verses 13-15 speak symbolically about how we should strive and go out of our way to provide the best of everything we can for our family. Even the basic necessities...especially the basic necessities like food, clothing and shelter. This a recurring theme in Proverbs 31.

Verse 13: “She seeketh wool,
and flax, and worketh willingly
with her hands”. The mention of
wool and flax indicates that she
provided the proper clothing and
bedding for her family all year
round.

The word “**linen**” comes from the Latin name for “**flax**”. Flax is a plant fiber, like cotton, but **it takes much longer to harvest and is very difficult to weave into fabric.** Linen keeps you cooler than cotton. **Two main factors that make linen cooler than cotton are its breathability and the ability to wick away moisture.** <http://www.masterclass.com>

The production of wool begins with the shearing of wool-bearing animals. Wool's scaling and crimp make it easier to spin the fleece by helping the individual fibers attach to each other, so they stay together. Because of the crimp, wool fabrics have greater bulk than other textiles, and they hold air, which causes the fabric to retain heat. Wool has a high specific thermal resistance, so it impedes heat transfer in general. <http://www.masterclass.com>

Verse 14: “She bringeth her food from afar” is symbolic of the thought, care and effort put forth to provide, not just food, but delicious, healthy and delectable food for the family.

Verse 15: She “riseth also while it is yet night and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens” is representative of the energy and resolve put forth to make sure everyone in her circle of influence is taken care of...even the household servants (hired help).

Application: Every day, give those that you live with your best effort. Be a positive force in your own house, even when it comes to the basic necessities. Try your best to make the ordinary things special where you reside.

Application: In this pandemic, we're spending more time at home. We're doing more of our own cooking and cleaning, etc. Commit tonight to go out of your way to give it your best, even if your role is cleaning up after the cook or saying a sincere thank you and appreciation to those that wait on you – paid or volunteer.

APPLICATION: The bottom-line...

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might...”

Ecclesiastes 9:10

Proverbs 31:16

16 She considereth a field, and
buyeth it: with the fruit of her
hands she planteth a vineyard.

9. Verse 16 states, “She considereth a field, and buyeth it”. Have you considered “your field” in the 21st Century? How?

The fact that our virtuous woman considered (carefully deliberated and calculated) a field and then purchased it, indicated that this was a **long-term investment and business venture**. “With the fruit of her hand, she planteth a vineyard” indicates that she had a “green thumb” or horticultural expertise and knew how to get the maximum value and return from the land for her family for generations to come.

Factors the “virtuous woman” had to consider when purchasing a field and planting a vineyard: soil quality, underlying rock, altitude, slope of hill and terrain, orientation toward the sun, and the microclimate elements (typical rain, winds, humidity, temperature variations, etc.).

APPLICATION: Although we do not live in an agrarian/agricultural society as this “noble women” did, we still have to *consider our field*. That is, we need to pray and then think long and hard (research, ask questions, etc.) when we make **serious financial and life-changing decisions**. Because these important decisions will have a major impact on our present and future personal and financial wellbeing of our families.

****Not taking action, will still bring consequences and repercussions for our future.**

Have You Considered Your Field(s)?

1. Should I retire this year or wait until...?
2. Should I sell/downsize my house and...?
3. Should I sell/rent my house and move in with my...?
4. Should I refinance or take out a reverse...?
5. Should I move to Tennessee, Texas or Florida...?

Have You Considered Your Field(s)?

6. Should I change my asset allocation mix...?
7. Should I open a 529 for my grandkids...?
8. Should I update my will/trust, life insurance beneficiaries, or buy earthquake coverage...?
9. Should I start up a business or buy a franchise or...?
10. Should I leave all my assets to my family or should I leave some to the church or some to Christian institutions of higher learning...?

The Bible Speaks On Both Sides of the Money Issue

Proverbs 13:22 A good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children...~We need to think about our financial situation for the sake of our families now and in the future.

Proverbs 22:7 The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender. ~ Money gives you and your family more options and control of your present and future situation.

1 Timothy 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for members of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. ~ We are obligated as Christians to look after the financial wellbeing of our families. If we don't provide for our families, we're no better than atheists.

The Bible Speaks On Both Sides of the Money Issue

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and overwhelmed themselves with many griefs. ~ **Don't allow money to dominate your every thought and compromise your relationship with God and His people.**

Matthew 6:26 Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ~ **No matter our financial situation, we have to lean on God.**

Matthew 8:36 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? **37** Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ~ **Don't forget to build up and store up your spiritual treasure every day.**

The Bible Speaks On Both Sides of the Money Issue

Luke 12:15-21 15And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. 16And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: 17And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? 18And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. 20But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 21**So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.**

Proverbs 31:17

17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms.

10. What basic practice can we glean from verse 17 that can be profitable for us as we live our daily lives?

APPLICATION: The “virtuous woman” kept herself in good physical condition. Her lower body (**She girdeth her loins with strength**) and her upper body (**and strengtheneth her arms**) were strong. The virtuous woman was intentional and committed in her pursuit of a healthy body.

1 Timothy 4:8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

1 Corinthians 6:19 - What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost [which is] in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?

We are blessed with many options to keep ourselves fit, even in this pandemic.

**LOW IMPACT
&
NO IMPACT
WORKOUT
OPTIONS**

“In our society,
what masquerades
as old age, most of
the time is decay”



Proverbs 31:18-19

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.

**11. What can we learn
about how to approach
our jobs and careers
from verses 18-19?**

APPLICATION: The virtuous woman “perceives that her merchandise is good” is another way of saying, “she knows that her work and/or her products are top quality”. She doesn’t cheat “the man” or her customers. When you do business with her, you get your money’s worth.

APPLICATION: The bible says,
“her candle goeth not out by night”.
The virtuous woman is a hard
worker. She'll do whatever it takes
to get the job done. Even if she has
to burn the midnight oil sometimes.

Colossians 3:22-24 KJV

22 Servants [employees], obey in all things your masters [employers] according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; [don't cheat the man]

23 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; [do your best on the job]

24 Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.

[the Lord will ultimately make sure you get what you deserve]

Proverbs 31:20

20 She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

12. How might the terms “poor” and “needy” refer to different folks in verse 20?

APPLICATION: Certainly this text likely refers to the “poor and needy” as a singular group that lacks sufficient money or resources to live at a standard considered comfortable or normal in a given society. However, in our day and time – especially during this pandemic -, the “poor and needy” may not necessarily refer to the same people.

APPLICATION: We know that even before the pandemic began, there were plenty of “poor” and underprivileged people that lacked even the basic necessities such as food, shelter, access to health care, etc. And even now, they still need our help.

APPLICATION: On the other hand, we also know that even if you have the basic necessities of life and beyond in our society, you can still be “needy”. This is especially true during the current pandemic. Our present isolation from each other has intensified some of our basic human emotional **needs** that have largely gone unmet. In other words, now more than ever, many in our society (and the church) are suffering from the “**need**” to be **supported, comforted, sought out, validated** and **attended to** emotionally and socially.

APPLICATION: The time is now for us to act. Our Christian, neighborly and civic duty is to find ways to meet the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of others. If we think about it, there are always people in our circle of influence that are “needy” or vacant in some aspect whether it’s spiritual, physical or emotional.

APPLICATION: We must act and fill these needs; and we must have the right spirit and attitude when we help others no matter if the need is spiritual, physical or emotional. The bible says the virtuous woman, “**openeth her arms**” and “**extendeth her hands**” to the those in need. These expressions speak volumes about her attitude while helping others.

Matthew 6:1-4 CEB

Be discreet and respectful in your giving.

Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people in order to be seen by them, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heaven. “Thus, when you give to the poor, sound no trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be praised by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you give to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.”

Proverbs 31:21, 22 & 24

21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. 22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. 24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant.

13. Although verses 21, 22 and 24 all refer to clothing, do you agree that the meaning is different for each verse? If so, what is the moral in each verse?

APPLICATION: Verse 21 revisits the theme from earlier verses that this person is always looking out and ahead for the welfare of everyone in her place of residence. They will not only be warm and comfortable (**in the snow**), but will look more than presentable as well (**scarlet**).

APPLICATION: Verse 22 reinforces the idea that the virtuous woman liked nice things for herself and those in her household (**coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple**). Well...she worked hard and was generous, so as it states in verse 31, “**Give her of the fruit of her own hands**”.

APPLICATION: Verse 24 reminds us that the “virtuous woman” was an incredible, entrepreneurial go-getter (**delivereth girdles unto the merchant**). Her goods were top-notch and she was not hesitant in taking every opportunity to help “bring home the bread” (**She maketh fine linen, and selleth it**).

Proverbs 31:23

23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.

14. The mention of her husband in verse 23 seems to be out of context with the verses that precede and follow it, so why is it here and what is the point?

APPLICATION: We are a reflection of and we reflect upon our spouse, our children, our parents and our friends and associates by the way we carry ourselves (conduct/conversation KJV). Your status and respectometer and how you are perceived (rightly or wrongly) in large part comes from your chosen associates.

APPLICATION: Because of the high moral character, generosity and industriousness of this woman, her husband was highly regarded, trusted and respected in the community where they lived.

The reputation and character of the wife plays a key role in the qualification to serve as a leader in the church.

1 Timothy 3:11 & 7

11 Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things.

Reputation at large in the community as well

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Proverbs 31:25

25 Strength and honor are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come.

15. What important and timely lesson(s) can we learn from verse 25?

APPLICATION: Verse 25, commences with, “**Strength and honor are her clothing**”. This proclamation indicates that this virtuous person is all about living her life with determination, resilience, confidence and self-respect.

APPLICATION: Verse 25, ends with, “**She shall rejoice in time to come**”. This declaration points to the fact that this “virtuous woman” is optimistic about the future and looks forward to the days she has left upon this earth. She is prepared to redeem the time by making an impact on her household and the communities that she belongs to. We should emulate her example in our approach to life.

Proverbs 31:26

26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.

16. Break down the two phrases from verse 26, “She openeth her mouth with wisdom” and “Her tongue is the law of kindness”, and explain what the two phrases might look like in today’s world for all of us.

APPLICATION: Verse 26, says, “**She openeth her mouth with wisdom**”. This shows the virtuous woman recognized the power of speech and words. Obviously, she chose to use the power of her speech to help **guide, encourage** and **uplift** others. We should follow suit.

APPLICATION: Verse 26, concludes with, “Her tongue is the law of kindness”. This demonstrates the choice of the virtuous woman to take the high road of compassionate and thoughtful communication as “the rule” and normal course of action with all people that she comes in contact with. This would include family, business associates, the needy, the powerless, strangers, rude people, etc.

APPLICATION: Ephesians 4:29-32, says,
“29 Let no corrupt communication proceed
out of your mouth, but that which is good to
the use of edifying, that it may minister grace
unto the hearers.

30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God,
whereby ye are sealed unto the day of
redemption.”

APPLICATION: Ephesians 4:29-32

“31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and **evil speaking**, be put away from you, with all malice:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

APPLICATION: James 5:5-10 KJV

5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth!

6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.

7 For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind:

APPLICATION: James 5:5-10 KJV

8 But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.

9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

10 Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.

Proverbs 31:27

27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.

**17. Speak on the
message in verse 27.**

APPLICATION: Verse 27 is a another recurring theme for Proverbs 31. The virtuous woman is a skilled and committed keeper of the home as indicated with the phrase, “**She looketh well to the ways of her household**”. We know that she is skilled in many capacities outside of the home as well, but that does not preclude her from taking care of business at home.

APPLICATION: She, “eateth not the bread of idleness”, echoes the notion that this person was proactive in her efforts to make sure that all was well at home. She was not a lethargic procrastinator.

All of us (regardless of gender) in this day and age, must be willing to take on diverse household responsibilities for the sake of maintaining a properly functioning Christian home and environment. Husband and wife and all family members must look well to the ways of their household. So...turn off that TV, get off that Internet and get busy taking care of essential family business.

Proverbs 31:28

28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

18. What is the essential and crucial takeaway from verse 28?

APPLICATION: The KJV says, “her children **arise up**”. This indicates that her children make a concerted effort to show appreciation for their mother. They “**call her blessed**”, because they’ve seen how God has blessed her to bless them and everyone else in her circle of influence.

APPLICATION: Her husband calls her blessed as well, “**and he praises her**”. It sounds like her husband does more than give her a token thank you. Praise is defined as the **act of expressing approval, adoration, admiration, commendation and/or laudation**. Husbands, when was the last time you **praised** your wife? And...vice versa.

Proverbs 31:29

29 Many daughters have done
virtuously, but thou excellest
them all.

19. What should we keep in mind about this “ideal” woman as we read the phrase, “thou excellest them all” in verse 29?

APPLICATION: We should remember that this is an idyllic woman. She is the answer to the question, “Who can find a virtuous woman” and what would she be like. This renaissance woman described in Proverbs 31, is an example of what the ultimate woman looks like. The challenge was...son, when you’re looking to settle down, this is what you should aim for.

APPLICATION: It is a mistake to expect every woman or wife to have all the characteristics that this “ideal” woman has.

Chances are, your wife may not be perfect, but she is probably the perfect woman for you.

Proverbs 31:30

30 Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

20. Speak on verse 30 so that it applies to every one of us.

APPLICATION: Verse 30 essentially says that **style**, **elegance** and **poise** can disguise the true character of a person (temporarily): and no matter how gorgeous and good-looking a person is, physical attractiveness is a short-term situation at best. But a person, that puts God first and consistently exhibits qualities of inner beauty, she/he should be esteemed and given respect and honor.

Proverbs 31:31

31 Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.

21. What is the conclusion of the matter in verse 31?

In verse 31, where it says, “give her of the fruit of her hand” reminds us that our women (and men) that give a lot of themselves need to be recognized, rewarded and recompensed according to their efforts and contributions and according to her/his wishes.

In verse 31, where it says, “**let her own works praise her in the gates**” in essence states, “A person who lives the kind of noble life presented in Proverbs 31 will not have to promote herself/himself: her life, her character and her example, over time, will more than speak for itself”.

PROVERBS 31 - LESSONS LEARNED

1. She made herself valuable to everyone

- Her Family
- Employees(her maidens)
- Her community
 - Business associates
 - The poor and needy

PROVERBS 31 - LESSONS LEARNED

2. She kept busy by maximizing her talents and working hard
 - At home
 - In her businesses

PROVERBS 31 - LESSONS LEARNED

3. She looked out and ahead for her family

- Daily physical wellbeing
 - Clothing & tapestry
 - Winter
 - Summer
 - Food
 - Interesting (Merchant ships)
 - Healthy

PROVERBS 31 - LESSONS LEARNED

4. Prepared for and invested in her family's future

- Considered her "field"
 - Acquired assets that would benefit her descendants for generations to come
- Sold girdles and products to the merchants

PROVERBS 31 - LESSONS LEARNED

5. Lived a life that commanded respect and adoration from her spouse and children (those in her circle of influence)

PROVERBS 31 - LESSONS LEARNED

6. Most of all she “feared” the Lord

- She lived a life that aligned with God’s word and will