

Wisdom For Leaders And Ladies

Proverbs 31

MEMORY VERSE

PROVERBS 31:30

“Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.”

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

One sheet of white cardstock for every four children, cut into quarter pieces, safety pins and markers.

A straw for every student, four bowls, aluminum foil cut into 2”x 2” pieces (crumbled up into nickel sized wads).

ATTENTION GETTER!

Make a Name Tag

For this activity you will need one sheet of white cardstock for every four children, cut into quarter pieces, safety pins and markers. Give each child a quarter sheet of cardstock and some markers. Have them write their name down the side of the nametag. Then, like an acrostic, have the children think of virtues or godly traits that would be good for them to exhibit in their lives. See the example below. Then allow the children to decorate their name tag and pin it onto their shirts.

Introduce today’s lesson explaining that as young men and women we should be most concerned about being godly rather than how we look and other things that don’t matter.

Example:

	○	○
C	-	Caring
A	-	Always dependable
R	-	Reliable
O	-	Obedient
L	-	Loves Jesus
I	-	Industrious
N	-	Nice
E	-	Extends kindness

LESSON TIME!

Throughout the entire book of Proverbs we have been taught the difference between wisdom and foolishness. And now in the last chapter of the book we end with the same theme, **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

When we are serving the Lord, our only desire should be to obey and follow Him. If we are obeying and following the Lord, our lives will reflect godly character. Unlike the first 30 chapters of the book of Proverbs, where the wisdom is being handed down from a father, this last chapter ends with a mother exhorting her son in the ways of leadership and what to look for in a godly woman. But like the entire book, chapter 31 continues the theme: **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:1, 2

The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him:

What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows?

Nowhere else in Proverbs or the Bible for that matter, do we read about King Lemuel. The name Lemuel means "belonging to God" and some believe that this may have been another name for King Solomon. Since Solomon was a child of David and Bathsheba's, perhaps this was another name that was given to him.

Although we do not know for sure who King Lemuel was, we can be sure that his mother had deep love and affection for him in how she referred to him in these first two verses. She desired to teach him the way in which he should lead his kingdom and in ways that he would live up to his name. Did you know that your mother and father have a responsibility to teach you the ways of God? Here

this mother obviously feared the Lord and was passing on to her son that **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:3, 4

Do not give your strength to women, nor your ways to that which destroys kings.

It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes intoxicating drink;

This mother is stressing what has already been said in previous chapters of the book of Proverbs. She begins with telling her son not to give his strength to women; in other words she was speaking of the adulterous woman. His mother was backing up what had already been said about the adulterous woman and what would happen if he chose to get involved in that kind of relationship. He would be made weak. This mother may have been repeating what his father had taught him in previous chapters. This mom was stressing to the son she loved that **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

This mother also pointed out the dangers of alcohol and that her son needed to guard himself against drinking. This mother knew that if her son would get involved with alcohol it would affect his sound judgment and decision-making as a leader. Both of these things that this mother was teaching are the same for us today. If we involve ourselves in ungodly relationships or choose things that are not good for us, we will reap the consequences of doing such things. But if we look unto the Lord for our guidance and listen to our parents when they teach us about God and His ways, our lives will reflect Christ because **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:8, 9

Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die.

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

When we are believers in Jesus Christ we are to speak the truth in love and grace to those who don't know who Jesus is. Here this mother is telling her son that he was to be bold and have courage to speak up as a leader of the people. We don't have to be rulers of a kingdom to speak the truth and help those that are needy.

In the days that these words were written, people were being put to death for things like stealing and adultery. This mother was telling her son to speak for those who may have been falsely accused or those who were in need of food and shelter. Speaking the truth about Jesus and giving to the poor and needy are Christ-like characteristics and **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:10

Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies.

The rest of the chapter deals with the godly wife and mother. So much has already been written about the adulterous woman that now we get to see what the godly woman looks like. Here the mother is telling her son the characteristics of a godly woman and what to look for in choosing a wife and mother for his children. She begins with telling him that a virtuous wife is not easy to find. She is rare and precious and more valuable than rubies. The virtuous woman is not just that way; she is made virtuous by her relationship with God.

Some day, if the Lord tarries, each of you will be choosing a husband or wife to live with the rest of your life. It is very important that you choose a mate who first of all loves the Lord and secondly lives for the Lord. Beauty or any other thing is not nearly as important as the person's relationship with Jesus. So many problems can be avoided in your marriage if you marry a godly person. True beauty is on the inside and expressed in a relationship with Jesus Christ. **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:11, 12

The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain.

She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

The first virtue that the mother speaks of her to her son is that the godly woman will be trustworthy. She will be the one person that her husband trusts. He will trust her enough to give her his love. She won't be contrary and she only wants to do her husband good and not evil. In order for us to be trustworthy we must first trust in the Lord. Trustworthiness is a virtue that is from God and **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:13-15

She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands.

She is like the merchant ships, she brings her food from afar.

She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants.

This second virtue speaks about the woman being industrious. She works hard to supply for the needs of her family and anyone else that may be living in her home. In Israel in those days and even in some areas still today, the women do a lot of the shepherding and tending to the farming. She is not lazy and takes care of her family by cooking and serving them. If we are serving the Lord we desire to serve others too! **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:16-19

She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard.

She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms.

She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night.

She stretches out her hands to the distaff, and her hand holds the spindle.

Thirdly, this woman is very resourceful. She knows how to shop and look for the best deals. She is good with money and spends wisely. She is not unwise with her time or money because she always keeps herself busy taking care of the house and herself. She knows what her family needs and uses wisdom when purchasing it. Apparently she knows the best way to invest the money so the family will be well taken care of. But this kind of wisdom only comes from a life that is devoted to the ways of the Lord. We cannot serve God and be selfish at the same time. **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:20

She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy.

Just like the mother was telling her son to be compassionate on those less fortunate, she is also telling him to look for the same virtue in a wife. The fourth virtue is compassion. This godly woman is not only looking out for her own family but keeps her eyes and heart open to see the needs of those around her. Again, this woman is not selfish with her time or money. **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:21-25

She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet.

She makes tapestry for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple.

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

She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants.

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

Not only does the godly woman know how to buy and sell, she does not worry about tomorrow because she is prudent in making sure her family has the necessary needs met in advance. This fifth virtue is prudence. She does not spend all kinds of money on herself or her family in top designer clothes; no she makes them herself. We need to be just as prudent today. This woman is showing prudence by making clothes herself and not paying someone else to do it. That does not mean we need to start making our own clothes, but it does mean when the Lord gives you a talent, use it to bless Him and others. Obviously this woman was a talented seamstress and she sold her products to others! When God gives us a talent we need to use it in ways that are creative and

bring glory to His name. **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

Speaking with Wisdom

Play this simple variation of the Telephone Game to show how important it is to watch what we say. Read Proverbs 31:26. Have the children sit in a circle. Choose one student to go first and have them whisper something into the person sitting in their clockwise direction. Have the children pass along the secret going around until it comes back to the original person and then see how accurate it is.

You can also have two different teams sitting in a circle. As the teacher you can whisper the same word to the first person in each group and see which group remains the closest to what you said. This game will help the children realize how careful they need to be with their words.

PROVERBS 31:26-29

She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness.

She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

“Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all.”

The last virtue spoken of here is that this woman is a good reputation. When she speaks she uses wisdom and from that wisdom comes kindness. She does not hurt or abuse with her mouth. Because this woman loves and serves the Lord, she loves

and serves her family. Her family comes first after her relationship with God.

As a result of this woman being virtuous, her children and her husband give her praise. Her husband thinks and believes that his wife is the best wife on earth. Here King Lemuel's mother is telling him "you need to let your wife know how special she is." **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

PROVERBS 31:30-31

Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised.

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

The proverb ends with the mother exhorting the son not to go by outward appearance only. Just because someone or something is very beautiful to look at does not mean that there is beauty within. In 1 Peter 3:3-4 we are told, "Do not let your adornment be merely outward-arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel. Rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God."

The last verse lets us see that this woman's example is her witness. **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.** When we are truly serving the Lord our lives will be the strongest witness for Jesus Christ. Because this woman feared the Lord, He blessed her with godly virtues. God will create the same virtues in you and me if we are willing to follow Him. **Godly virtues are a result of serving the Lord.**

The Diligence Game

This game will reinforce the importance of diligence in our lives. Review the importance of diligence to the class. For this game you will need a straw for every student, four bowls, aluminum foil cut into 2" x 2" pieces (crumbled up into about 20 nickel sized wads).

Divide the aluminum wads in half and place 10 in each of two bowls. Divide the class into two teams and have them line up. At the beginning of each line place the bowl with the 10 aluminum wads on the floor. At the other end of the classroom place the empty bowl. Give each child a straw. The object will be to get all of the wads from one bowl to the other across the classroom by sucking air through the straw and holding the wad with the straw and carrying it to the other bowl. The first group to get all 10 to the other bowl is the winner. It will take a lot of diligence because it is not as easy as it sounds.

PRAYER

Lead the children in a prayer of commitment to be the best they can be in whatever God has called them to do. Whether that is being a good husband or wife someday or a good leader, it begins by making a commitment to Jesus now. If there are any children who have not yet responded to the gospel, give them opportunity to do so.