

Proverbs 31:10-31

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. 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. 16 She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. 17 She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. 18 She perceiveth that her merchandise *is* good: her candle goeth not out by night. 19 She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff. 20 She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. 21 She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household *are* clothed with scarlet [margin: *or double garments*]. 22 She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing *is* silk and purple. 23 Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. 24 She maketh fine linen, and selleth *it*; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. 25 Strength and honour *are* her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. 26 She openeth her mouth with wisdom: and in her tongue *is* the law of kindness. 27 She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband *also*, and he praiseth her. 29 Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. 30 Favour *is* deceitful, and beauty *is* vain: *but* a woman *that* feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. 31 Give her the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates." [signed *Bathsheba*]

Introduction To Verses 10-31

A Rare Kind Of Woman To Find

Now, she gives that opening exhortation, and then she brings him [Solomon] to this prophecy, it's in the form of poetry, he evidently memorized it, because he wrote it down. As we come to **verse 10, "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."** every consecutive verse goes to the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And it was written that way so it was easy to memorize, evidently, it had been memorized, that's why it was put to the page. And we come now, this is the woman that Solomon never had, this the one he never found. This is the one his mother talked to him about that she herself was not. She had been an adulteress, she had made mistakes. This is not a real woman, ok, so I don't want anybody here say *'I'm not coming back next week,'* this is not a real woman, this is a description written to the Hebrew alphabet. Verse 30 tells us everything about her that we need to know, if you look there, it says **"Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised."** (verse 30) "Favour," smoozing with the right people. Girls, sometimes you can look at somebody, and you know, I'll tell you this, I'm always fearing about *DRAMA*, drama, drama, drama, drama, drama, and it's on these things [mobile devices, computers]...Instagram, facebook, you know, there's like this ridiculous, ridiculous, parents, break those things with a hammer! Reel this in. There's so much drama! It's not Christlike, kids [and adults] hurting each other, it's crazy. **'Favour is deceitful, all of that is deceitful.'** **'Beauty, it's vain, it's skin-deep.'** We used to say *"Beauty is skin deep, but ugly goes clean to the bone."* You see a beautiful woman with a foul mouth, it ruins everything. **"Favour is deceitful, beauty is vain:"** here it says it, **"but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised."** (verse 30) this is the virtuous woman. And it's never fear in the Bible in the sense of being tortured or groveling, this is somebody who lives her life in reference to Almighty God, knows him as LORD and Saviour, understands what he did on the cross for her. And they live their lives in light of God Almighty, and knows that there's accountability, and that's a hard woman to find. All of these other things are simply reflections of the fact, because it doesn't say she's beautiful, it doesn't say she does a great job with makeup, it doesn't say she's a millionaire, it doesn't say any of those things. So everybody here, ladies, every one of you, is supposed to be one of these. Not in regards to physical beauty, physical success, reputation, but a woman that fears the LORD. I'll tell you, that's

why, sadly, a virtuous woman, a pure woman, a virtuous woman, who can find? Why are they so hard to find? Not here at Calvary Chapel, they're easy to find here. But why are they so hard to find? Because they're so...the reason they are so hard to find, is because they are so seldom sought, the woman that is sought is the sensual, sexual woman, the woman with all the other priorities, that woman who smells like *Poison, Passion, Seduction*, you know, *Ox Going To the Slaughter*, it's another kind of woman that this world pursues. It doesn't say this woman is impossible to find, she's rare. Because she doesn't care about all the other peer-pressure and what the world is saying. This is a woman who has values that maybe in this present world are seldom sought, and other women are putting themselves in the position and set of values that are sought all the time, because they want to be found. This woman's more difficult to find, who can find a virtuous woman, why? Because there aren't that many that are saying '*This is the way I'm going to live, no matter whose seeking me, I'm going to live in the fear of my Lord, and I'm going to live this way.*' Her price, it says, I can't ever get it out of my mind when I read this, one of the professors at the University of Pennsylvania, years ago, said that he was teaching sociology class and picked this description of an ancient woman, and was in I think Irvine Auditorium with a huge class, and said "A *virtuous woman, who can find, her price is far above rubies,*" and he said some kid in the back yelled "Oh ya, what was Ruby's price?" So, somehow that stuck in my mind, I've never been able to get that out of my mind [laughter]. **"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies."** (verse 10) the idea is her value, far above rubies, the idea is priceless. It speaks of gemstones, a lot of scholars feel that the word actually doesn't mean rubies, it means a particular type of coral that's very rare. But the idea is, she's like jewels, gemstones, you know, the Israelis, famous for traveling with a little sack of diamonds, because if you want to carry a million dollars cash, you have a big suitcase. If you want to carry \$3,000,000 in gemstones, nobody's going see it. [Watch *Schindler's List*, you will see the Jews wrapping diamonds in bread and swallowing them, before the Germans came to take them away, so they could safely take their wealth with them, undetected. There are a lot of blood-diamonds buried throughout the locations where the concentration camps were which have never been found, because now it's against the law to dig around there looking for them, out of the German government's respect for those who died

there.] And ladies, you ain't seen jewelry till you've gone to the Middle East, I'm telling you and you see jewelry there. Anything here that looks gaudy, over there they make it right, it's just amazing. So, for thousands of years there's value placed on rubies, diamonds, precious gems, and it says this virtuous woman, that's what she's like, she's like a rare jewel, hard to find, priceless. The truth of who she is, has nothing to do with deceit, vain deceit, doesn't have anything to do with beauty, she's priceless, she's rare, because she's a woman who fears the LORD. You can marry her, she's never going to cheat on you. She's going to tell her sons and daughters not to give themselves to sexual immorality or alcohol. How many of us, grew up in the world, you know, I got saved, and one thing I was determined, I didn't want to see any of my kids live the life that I had lived. Because I was immoral, and I was drunk a lot, and high all the time. And I got saved, and I don't want any of my kids to live the life that I lived. Am I trying to hold out on them? Keep them from having fun? No, I want them to be rare jewels, I want them to have a value rarely sought in this world. I want them to stand above those things, as you do, for those that you love.

This Proverbs 31 Woman Is An Ideal To Aim For, She's Not Real

Proverbs 31, we've come as far as verse 10, we took the evening last week to look at the first nine verses, worked through a bit I believe the identity of king Lemuel and his mother. I personally lean towards the fact that it's Bathsheba talking to Solomon, I have reasons for that, we went over those things. There are others that take other positions. She challenges him, she doesn't tell him how to reign, how to run his kingdom in any of this. She basically says, **'Stay away from immorality and stay away from substance abuse, stay away from immoral women, don't give yourself to that, and stay away from alcohol. Don't give yourself to the things that the world gives itself to,'** she says to the son that she loves, and if this is Bathsheba, she watched women ruin, including her relationship, an adulterous relationship with David, watched the ruin of that household, murder, Amnon, Absalom, the whole family falling apart, alcohol and so forth. So I

assume these things are spoken to Solomon when he was younger, because he certainly did not heed the things that she said. And she finally comes to verse 10 and she says **'Now look, this is the kind of woman that I want you to look for.'** So, girls, as we go through, this is an ideal. This can't be a real human being, just can't be, as you study through. And this is a lesson for men. It's an acrostic, beginning in verse 10, which means each verse goes to the next letter of the Hebrew alphabet. And it was done that way for memorization. And evidently young Solomon had memorized these things, here we have them. So, good thing to go over with your sons, this is the kind of woman I want you to look for, these are the things that you need to take note of. Ah, certainly for your daughters, certainly gals, a great thing to look at the value we have, it says this is a prophecy, it's come from the Holy Spirit. So it is something of God's heart about what he looks for, when he looks at womanhood. Certainly in our world today, it's vastly different. Through these first 30 chapters of Proverbs we have heard much about the immoral woman, the seductress, the way she looks, what she does with her hair, her lips, her eyes, her words, we heard much of that. There's no description of this virtuous woman at all, we have no idea what she looks like, it doesn't give us her appearance a single time. Um, there is much in the Book of Proverbs about the whorish woman, there's much in the Book of Proverbs about the contentious woman, the woman whose always fighting, arguing with her husband, driving him out of the house, driving him to the rooftop, driving him to the wilderness, driving him further and further away. And all of a sudden we come to this ideal woman in chapter 31, and it's giving us, ok, this is Solomon, **'this is the kind of a woman I'd have you look for,'** someone he never found, by the way, I believe, sadly. But great things here for us. And look, as we go through, she is as much as a Mary as a Martha, the beginning of it, it's going to give us her industry, she's busy, she is busy, that's why you think she can't be a real woman, by the time you get to the things she does, you hear of her multitasking, she's gotta be an octopus to pull all this off. But then the whole heart of it, beginning in verse 25, it says **'internally, this is what drives it all,'** the Mary side of her, she's a combination of all of those things, put before us. I think there's many lessons, as we look into these things.

*One Of The Reasons This Kind Of Woman Is So Rare, Is
Because She's So Seldom Sought After*

So it begins, **“Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.” (verse 10)** verse 11, it says the heart of her husband, so it's talking about a wife, talking about a woman to be married to, who can find a virtuous, a woman of strength, character? It doesn't say you can't, I've found one, it doesn't say they're impossible to find. But they're a rarity, **“Who can find a virtuous woman, her price is far above rubies”** she's priceless, she's compared to the gems and most expensive things in the day...and again, girls, probably in our day, one of the reasons it's so hard to find this woman, virtuous woman, it's because she's so seldom sought. Women today know what men are after, is looks, makeup, figure, gotta be “hot,” sensual, sexual. You know, that's what the media constantly puts in front of us, it's what it constantly puts in front of a guy, you watch a football game, you see the constant parade of women during the commercials, *‘if you drink this kind of beer all the babes are gonna chase you.’* It's just this constant, I would call it brainwashing, but it's brain-dirtying, it's not brainwashing at all. And we just live in a culture where all of that is pushed to the fore constantly. So one of the reasons this kind of woman is probably difficult to find, is because she's so seldom sought. You know what, when I see a young girl, or a girl being raised at home, or a young woman who decides *‘You know what, I want to be like this,’* you're not going to be real popular, you're not going to be out with the crowd, you're not going to be invited to all the parties, it's not gonna happen.

Her Husband Can Trust Her

‘Who can find this virtuous woman, her price is far above rubies, she's invaluable.’ And it begins to tell us about her. **“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.” (verse 11)** notice, “doth safely trust in her.” He doesn't need to go out and gain anything extra, because she's far above rubies, what kind of spoil does he need. His heart safely trusts in her, when they make their vow, and she pledges her trust, her fidelity, this guy has no doubt, this

woman's never gonna cheat on me, I can trust her. I can trust her if we have children, I can trust her with my resources, I can trust her to remain loyal to me in regards to fidelity. The heart of her husband, right away it's telling us about her character, not what she looks like. **"The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life."** (verses 11-12) wow! you know, you'd think she'd take a day off once in awhile, this can't be a real girl. She's going to do him good, not evil, all the days of her life. You make those vows on your wedding day, I'm going to do a wedding this weekend, you have a young couple, and you're making them say this stuff to each other, **"for better, for worse, in sickness and in health, richer and poorer,"** they have no idea what they're saying to each other. You're making them make these promises, they have no idea, life's gonna take them to all those places, sooner or later. Now we have it on video, you said you're gonna...but just you know, these seasons of life, they come, and they wash over us, and we go through so many of those things. And the vow is, *"I'm going to remain faithful to you for all of these,"* she's going to do him good, not evil, all of the days of her life. Where do you find one of those? They are hard to find. And look, Eve, Adam, Paradise, custom-make, **'Here Honey, try this apple,'** however long she did good, it wasn't all of the days of her life. Right? Abraham and Sarah, however long she did good, at some point she finally says **'Hey, take Hagar, sleep with the Egyptian girl, God's not coming through.'** Rebekah, Eleazar was sent all the way to Padam-Aram, and certainly a remarkable girl, Eleazar brings her back, and Isaac jumps off, she falls off when she sees him in the field, no doubt did him good for all the days of her life, but then at the end, she favours Jacob over Esau, so she connives with Jacob against Esau against her old blind husband, and deceives him with the goat hair and all the food. Hey, this is a tough order. Rachel, just everything that Jacob did, you know, he got Leah first, he got Rachel, he's got Laban chasing him to kill him, here he finds out afterwards that she stole Laban's household idols, little idolater, she's got them hidden in her saddle, she stole the family idols, this is Rachel. You know, Moses, his wife curses him over the circumcision thing, you go through, Michal, laid down her life in the beginning with David, and then at the end she detests him, she despises him, because he serves the LORD with all of his heart. So, it's a tall order, tall order. [Comment: out of all of David's wives, it appears Bathsheba

became a believer under the influence of David, I'm just getting the sense of that.] She does him good, not evil, all of the days of her life. This is an ideal, and I don't know if anyone's ever lived up to it. But it doesn't lower the standards. It's like **'Husbands, love your wives like Christ loved the Church,'** ain't no husband ever done that. But that doesn't lower the standard, that's still the goal. And here's this picture too, she...the church, this woman is hard to find, I'm telling you. She does him good, not evil, all the days of her life.

The Industry Of This Woman

"She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands." (verse 13) you know where you find that, don't you? Maaa, it's not hard to find, it's hard to chase down, shave off, but she seeketh wool, flax is a reed that was woven into a fabric, **"and she worketh willingly with her hands."** "willingly" in the King James, the Hebrew is, the idea is **"she works in delight"** and **'she has pleasure in what she does with her hands.'** She's not stooping to do anything, she delights in what she does, in manual labour, in working, in keeping the home, she delights in it, she does it willingly. Hard to find. **"She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar." (verse 14)** very interesting, the only king, really, of all the Israelite, Judean kings that cared about this was Solomon, he had a fleet out of Elat, and he sent ships out of Joppa and they sailed the world. Solomon somehow was the one with vision, and he imported things from all over the world, he was the one who understood merchant ships, none of the other [Judean] kings were really like him, and it's interesting it seems that Bathsheba sees it, she recognizes it in him, what we should see in our kids when they're little. [Comment: Solomon, in his alliance with the Phoenician king Hiram, formed a naval-merchant marine alliance with the Maritime Phoenician empire, it was a combined Israelite-Phoenician navy and merchant marine, that when the Kingdom separated into two kingdoms under Solomon's son, Rehoboam, the northern kingdom of the ten tribes, called the House of Israel, inherited this maritime alliance, this joint naval-merchant marine with the Phoenician Empire. The importation of goods under this alliance, for the northern kingdom, continued up through Ahab and Jezebel. The

alliance died when Jehu killed off Jezebel and all her and Ahab's children. See <http://www.unityinchrist.com/kings/1.html> What kind of propensities did he have, what do they lend themselves to? Because you're like that from the time you're born, God puts some of those things in us. You guys know Ken Graves, right? Anybody, just me? Ken Graves when he was little, he said, 'When I was little they made me go to Sunday school,' and said they're singing 'I don't want to go march in the infantry, ride into cavalry, shoot the artillery,' and he said, 'I'm thinking, Come on, you're killing me, what kind of Lord's army is that!?' and he is like he is now, only in a little body, with a big beard, just you know. So, she recognizes in Solomon this propensity, she says, '**Look, this kind of woman, Solomon, she's like the merchant ships,**' and his ears went 'Right!' "**she bringeth her food from afar.**" There's planning, there's timing. '**she works with her hands, in delight and pleasure, she understands there's a task, and it takes planning, and it takes timing.**' "**She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.**" (verse 15) Girls, don't get discouraged, don't get depressed as we go through, we're not gonna start a counselling group next week, this is just, this is the ideal, you know. "**She riseth also while it is yet night**" guys are supposed to do that too, we read earlier in Proverbs, '**Those that seek me early shall find me.**' [my rising time is usually between 3 and 4am, well before my little grandkids get up, and you can no longer focus on a decent prayer and Bible study time.] "**She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.**" She takes care also of those who are in service in his house. Her husband evidently is of some means [this would have been Abigail, Nabal's wife, I think she was that kind of wife, even though he didn't deserve it]. So she takes care of the house, the kids get up, and they smell the bacon [in Israel, would have been beef-bacon] cooking, no that wouldn't happen in Israel would it? They get up, the lamb is on, the rack of lamb and eggs for breakfast, and you gotta remember your whole life when she does that. It says, "**She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard.**" (verse 16) You know, this lady, she attacks the day, she gets up early, I'm 65, I had a mom like that. I think I didn't appreciate it, because she would yell 'GET AWAKE, TIME TO GET UP!!!' and I'm thinking 'why you up so early?' but she'd be up, it would be dark, my dad left the same time every time I think, I don't know how many years, to go

to the Navy yard, Naval Department for 30 some years, and she was like a clock, that never stopped, just different generation. She was just in the hospital a little while ago, she had a fall and broke her hips, broke her wrist this time. And I stayed with her till about 1 O'clock in the morning, they finally got her a room, and then the specialist came the next day to take pictures, she needed pins and screws and all this. So I went back the next day to see her and she said, *"The pea soup here is wonderful,"* I said *"What are you talking about, how's your wrist feel?"* *"Oh it's fine."* I said, *"Mom, you sound like you're in a hotel,"* She said *"When I was a little kid, I was seven years old, when I got rheumatic fever, I got scarlet fever,"* and she said, *"pneumonia, and she said because grandpa was an upholsterer, our only choice was to quarantine the house, and he couldn't do business, so I had to go to the sanatorium, I at seven years old had to go to the sanatorium, and there were 100 girls in my dorm, there were no antibiotics, they all had different sicknesses, so they gave us cod-liver oil twice a day, some of them died. The older girls, they give you the cod liver oil, it tasted so bad they'd always give you a cookie or a piece of candy, at first, and they would all save theirs, and then at night when everybody went to bed, they'd get in a circle and all eat their cookies and candy, I was little, I tried to save mine, but I felt like I wanted to throw up all the time because I couldn't get the fish taste out of my mouth, I was so depressed. I was in there I forget, how many weeks, and I got to come home at Christmas, and within two weeks I had double pneumonia and then I was back in for months. I didn't think I was going to live. Now here I am in a bed, got controls, got my own bathroom, got my own TV, they give me a menu, what do you want me to do, complain? This is like a hotel!"* You think, that's a whole other generation, that's a whole other frame of mind. This lady, she's up, she's attacking the day, she's at it, she's working, she's taking care of her household, the people that are there, and then it says, above and beyond that, she considers a field, she doesn't buy it. She considers, it says, she thinks about a field, and the King James seems to indicate she buys it, and then the next idea would be that by the fruit of her hands she plants a vineyard. The Hebrew doesn't say that. It says ***"she considers a field, and then she buys it with the fruit of her hands,"*** in other words, she's been industrious enough, she has a reserve, she got her own reserve, her own resource, and she buys the field with her own money, so that she can plant a vineyard in it. Look, she's the one who plants the vineyard. There's no loss in this, she considers it,

she doesn't spend foolishly, she thinks about it, she weighs it out, she realizes *'OK, I have this much to invest, I get this field, I get it planted, this is going to turn a profit, it's going to be a good deal.'* She's the one who goes out and plants the vineyard with her own hands, no loss in this thing. Luke 17 says, you know, she girdeth her loins with string, and she strengthens her arms, she's got these guns, this woman, she's out there plowing the field, planting the vineyard early, doing this. Where do you find this woman? It's what it says, she's hard to find. When you're in Israel, I've been there 20 some times, the Bedouin are still there, and they're honoured by the government, they're nomadic, you go around the hills around Jerusalem you see these black tents. And they live just like Abraham did, except, you see the Honda generator next to the tent and an antenna sticking out of the top, and they're sitting there watching *American Idol* in their tents. They bring their sheep in the tent, and they normally take four wives, and again, the first three wives, they get as they can afford them, they say over here you pay once for your wife, in America you pay for the rest of your life. That's what they say, I'm quoting them, I don't believe any of that [ya right]. But, you get a strong one, because she puts the tent up, takes it down, moves the tent, takes care of the sheep, you want a woman with guns here. And then they say for their old age, their fourth wife is the pretty one, it's just for the old age. But this is the culture, it's saying here, she's strong, she's fit, she's doing all this stuff, buying land, she's planting vineyards, she's getting up early before anybody else, she's got everything going, she's like these merchant ships, she's out shearing the sheep, she's doing all this. This can't be a real woman. **"She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms." (verse 17) "She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night." (verse 18)** King James says "candle," there were no candles back then, there were only lamps, candles came thousands of years later. This is her oil lamp. **"her lamp goeth not out by night."** No wonder her price is far more than rubies, no ruby can do all of this. She's up, it's dark, her light is still shining, she's working. My wife will do that sometimes, she's into the computer at 2 o'clock in the morning, *'What are you doing? I have to get this done,' 'Honey, the rest of the world is asleep, the Rapture might come and nobody will ever get to read what you're doing,'* but she's driven this way, her lamp doesn't go out by night. And look, beyond all that, **"She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." (verse 19)** Then she goes to the

loom, and she's weaving. Of course she is, because she was out shearing the sheep, what's she supposed to do with the wool? She's gotta do something with it, she's got the flax, so she's made cloth, so then it says, in the midst of planting the field, shearing the sheep, being like the ships of Tarshish, doing all this stuff, building up her goods, knowing her merchandise is good, staying up late, getting up before it's light, staying up at night, and then in her spare time she goes to the loom and she's making clothes, in her spare time. [Actually, it was seasonal, planting, sheep shearing, was spring, summer, fall, in winter there was times for weaving and doing indoor industrious things, just as our Pilgrim families did, they didn't just sit around idle in winter.] She let's her hand to the spindle, and her hands take hold of the distaff, she's at the loom, she's weaving.

'Solomon, Find A Woman Who Doesn't Think Of Herself All The Time'

And **"She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." (verse 20) 'Solomon, find a woman who doesn't think of herself all the time.'** You know, sometimes for all of us, it really does take "stretching" and "reaching," these are the two interesting words in the Hebrew, stretching is the idea of spreading out, sometimes to take care of people that are less fortunate than us, it takes a stretch, we stretch our budget, we stretch our time. It says, this woman realizes, evidently that to whom much is given, much is required. With all the other things she's got going on, this is a woman who thinks of those who have it worse than she does. You know, sometimes I think, we get desensitized by the media, constantly washing over us. I saw the picture, it was a little boy in his father's arms that had drowned. Evidently the mom and two boys drowned and the father said, *"I'm going back to Syria, I have nothing to escape from now."* And I just looked at that, and thought *'That could be Madison and Avery, Mike's girls, it could be my daughter Joanna, my daughter Hannah, it can come here too, before it's over.'* And I looked, and thought *'Lord, that's a family, there's two little boys in a family, and they've drowned trying to escape the insanity in this world, and the mother's gone, and the father lost everything in a day.'* And somehow we have to ask

ourselves, **'Lord, make us aware of what's going on,'** you know, they're not just faces on a screen, these are moms and dads and grandmas and grandpas and sons and daughters, and nephews, these are real lives. We often go to bed in our warm beds, get up in the morning, plug in the coffee pot, and the next day they're still weeping and cold, and broken. And this woman has a great sense of it, like Dorcas, in the Book of Acts, chapter 9, where she made clothing for the less fortunate and the poor and so forth. And it says, this woman, with all the other stuff she's got going on, **'she stretches out her hand to the poor, she reaches forth her hands to the needy.'** This is not a greedy or stingy woman. And **verse 28** is going to say **"Her children call her blessed."** You know why? Because they see that. My wife has got a gift of mercy, she just, everybody's gonna get a card, everybody's gonna get something, everybody's going to get some kind of stuffed animal, *'Honey, why do you think about these things? Did you think this?'* *'No, I didn't think that at all.'* One time I remember, it was Good Friday, we were going to have the whole family over for Easter, and she called me and said *'I'm down in the University of Pennsylvania, you gotta come down here.'* I said, *'What do you mean I've gotta come down there, I don't have to come down there.'* *'You need to come down here, I met somebody, you need to come down here.'* *'Alright.'* I drive down. And, here she met this guy and his wife, ends up to be a Christian, came in for a physical, and the doctor said *'Your heart is so big, you need a transplant, you're not going home.'* So now the guy, and she's got a list, *'they need this, we're going to have to go home and shopping, and tomorrow we need to get them some food, we need to get them this, going to get them some commentaries, some musical this,'* and I'm thinking *'How do you get into these things? How do you find these people? You got a radar, a heart-magnet or something?'* and so the next day we're down to the guy, and the guy's saying to the doctor, *'Oh this is my pastor and wife,'* I'm thinking, *'She's the pastor, I'm the gripe,'* and he just went through this whole thing, he ended up getting a heart transplant, but you know, here's Cathy, her conference that year was "A Change of Heart, God give us a new heart." So she found out he was getting the transplant that week, she went down and interviewed him, which you're not allowed to do. Somehow they let her do this, she interviews the guy laying in bed, talking about getting a new heart, and shows it at the Women's Conference, you know. And the story's long. It gives the heart transplant, it ended up to be years, but she finds these things. I don't know, she's got

this radar to find this stuff. She's like this woman here, she stretches out her hands to the poor, she sees the less fortunate, she's touched by the cares and the brokenness and the hurt in other people's lives, so much like the one whose come from heaven.

She's Prepared, She Sees Things Coming

“She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet [margin: double garments].” (verse 21) I don't know if my wife is in that category all the time, she's not afraid of it when she tells me to get gas for the snowblower, get this, get the blankets, get candles, get flashlights, get this, get that. I should say *‘You got them big guns, why don't you go out there and fill the snowblower.’* [laughter] **‘She's not afraid of the snow for her household, for all her household are clothed with scarlet,’** now it's the most expensive form of clothing that's inferred here. And the idea is, the Hebrew can be translated “a double garment.” The idea is, this scarlet garment goes on over the outside over the top of your other clothing. Which says she's not afraid because she's prepared. She sees things coming, she's already thought ahead for her family, and she's done everything she needs to do for them, so that they're safe. She doesn't think it takes a village to raise a child. She thinks *‘It takes me to raise a child, my kid, I'll raise him.’* She doesn't think a public school can feed them, this is a woman who does it. [Comment: Free school meals came about during the Great Depression, when our President, Franklin D. Roosevelt and his VP, Henry A. Wallace put legislation through for this because of the nationwide poverty which was causing children to go hungry. It was for the very poor and destitute, to give these kids maybe the one good meal a day they got. It was a way these two great leaders were reaching out to the poor who needed it. Parents that can provide for their kids, that's fine. Programs like this, that help the very poor, there's nothing wrong with that at all.] This is a challenge for us. I think all of those things should happen, when the need is genuine, but I think everybody who can do, can do. That's a godly challenge. She's not afraid of difficulty when it comes, because she's thought ahead, she's prepared. **“She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple.” (verse 22)** she's at the loom, she's at the sheep, now it

tells us she embroiders, on top of everything else, she's got one hand tied behind her back while she's shaving sheep, she's at the loom while she's cooking breakfast, while she's planting a vineyard. **"She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple."** (verse 22) Look, look over at **verse 25**, it's going to tell us what really cooks inside this gal, it says **"Strength and honour are her clothing"** strength and honour, that's what she's really clothed in. All of these other things are flowing from there. It says **"her clothing is silk and purple."**

This Kind Of Woman Is An Enabler For Her Husband

Verse 23, "Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land." She hasn't sitteth when we read about her in verse 10. "when he sitteth among the elders of the land," the national leaders. Here's Bathsheba saying to Solomon, ***this kind of woman, son, is an enabler, she will live her life to move you forward.*** There will be a time in your life when you realize *'I can never do what I've done without this partner, she's more valuable than rubies, she's lived her life in a certain way, and done it with delight, to enable someone else.'* ***'Her husband is known in the gates,'*** the gates of the city then were, they were the only thing then that was relatively close to air-conditioning, during the day there were big stone gates, they were cooler, and the elders, the national leaders, would sit there in the gates of Jerusalem, they'd make their battle plans, that's where they would hold court. It says her husband is known in the gates, there's a testimony in her family and her marriage. When he sitteth among the elders, the national leaders, **"She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant."** (verse 24) besides everything she's making at home, she makes fine linen and sells it, and she delivers girdles, these are not girdles, these are sashes, belts, in that day you wore a broad belt or sash around your waist, to hold your robe in and so forth, **"and she delivers sashes unto the merchants."** This girl is really something.

Honour Is Her Clothing, Clothing Is Not Her Honour

Now, **verse 25** gets to the central issues, it's going to tell us, this is what's planted inside of her, this is where everything else flows from. This is the "Mary" part of her. Now there's a "Martha" part of her, that can wear you out. This is the "Mary" part, this is for all of us to take to heart, guys, gals. **"Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come."** (verse 25) now you see "are" if you have King James, it's in *italics*, and it's inserted to give the sense of what the Hebrew says, but it says here **'Strength and honour, are, they are her clothing. She shall rejoice in time to come.'** When she has clothed herself with strength and honour, no physical description here of her appearance, anywhere in here. In the world we live in, clothing is our honour, everybody is fashion-conscious, everybody has gotta wear a \$150 pair of sneakers that you can get murdered for. Everybody's gotta wear something that says something. Everybody's gotta wear the right kind of pants, the right kind of this, the right kind of outfit, the right kind of glasses, the right kind of that, you know. In this world, clothing is our honour, that's what people look at, they see what you have on, they see threads, they know what you look like, they know where you shop, what you're paying for it, you can get killed for it, but you got all this nice stuff. It says something different about her, **'Honour is her clothing, clothing is not her honour.'** Honour itself is what she's clothed her life in, honour and strength, different value system than the world that we live in. I'll tell you, Jonnie Eriksson when she was here, this on Sunday night, I could just sense the presence of Jesus, it was just like he was there, her love for him, her relationship is so real, so vibrant. Her and her husband come up, and helping her cough, because of the cancer that she's had, you know, she paraplegic, huge smile, glowing, clothed with something other than the human eye can measure. This woman is like that, it says. It says **"Strength and honour are her clothing,"** she's clothed herself with that, and look at the result of it, it says, **"and she shall rejoice in time to come."** The Hebrew says, **"she shall rejoice in latter days."** in the future. It's interesting, you may have a gloss that says "after time," and that's the thought there. She's not afraid of the future, not afraid of

taking her last breath. She's laid up treasure in heaven, not on the earth, and she's ready to take her last breath, the way she's lived, what she's done with her life, she's been industrious, what she's done with her actions, how she's reached out to other people, all of the things that she's done. And because of the way she's lived, the priorities she's had, it says **'she shall rejoice in time to come, she's lived for the right world, not for the wrong world.'** remarkably, that's one of the things it tells us about her, her life, she's clothed herself with strength and honour, and because of that she's looking forward to the next world, she's looking forward, not afraid of growing old, not afraid of any of that.

The Law Of Kindness Is In Her Mouth, How Many Woman Have Mouths Like That?

Verse 26, gives us another great characteristic this kind of woman, it says **"She openeth her mouth with wisdom: and in her tongue is the law of kindness."** We are told this earlier in the Book of Proverbs, and the Book of Proverbs has much to say about the tongue, as we go through. It says (elsewhere) **"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman that is without discretion."** You know, as a beautiful jewel, you see a beautiful attractive woman, she opens up her mouth, drops a curse word or says something vulgar, all the beauty just went away. It's like a beautiful jewel in a pigs nose, it says. Over and over again we've heard about this woman who just argues, it says she just fights with her husband, she's just contentious, it's her attitude, her spirit, she's contentious, she contends all the time. This woman, it says, she opens her mouth in wisdom, which means, that she keeps it closed in wisdom sometimes too. [Most of the Proverbs teach that those who want to be wise must keep their mouths shut most of the time and listen, and then it tells us who to listen to and who not to listen to.] It doesn't just say she opens her mouth, that's never an attribute that anybody looks for. She opens her mouth with wisdom, this is the right time to say something, timing is everything, which means that there are many times that she says nothing. **"and in her tongue is the law of kindness." (verse 26b)** Don't you wish there were more of those around, men or women? And you know people like that, that when you were a kid, there were people like that in my life. I remember growing up, I

had one aunt, Hannah, they called her *Aunt-Honey* because she was so sweet, her name was Hannah. They didn't have anything, they were poor, they lived on a farm, we'd go there, and she would just fall all over us, *'Come here, come here,'* Honey-aunt, just this lady. I had another aunt, we didn't like to go there, first of all, the house always smelled like mothballs. You couldn't move around because you would brake something. You had to sit on the sofa, and that had a plastic cover on it, it was just like *'Get me outa here! I'm a kid, this is purgatory, you're not supposed to put me in a situation like this.'* But you just remember people that are kind and gracious, how many of us can think back to somebody in Sunday school, or think back to when we were kids, to somebody who really reached out, that was gracious. It says **"She opens her mouth with wisdom: and in her tongue is the law of kindness." (verse 26)** [One of my father's favorite sayings was *"If you don't have anything nice to say, don't say anything at all."*] it's a law, it's not an option, not a suggestion, it's a law of kindness. And I know women who like to brag about Proverbs 31, and they need to read that verse, because they are critical, and they got no law of kindness going.

She's Observant To The Ways Of Her Household

Next it tells us this, **"She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness." (verse 27)** "she looketh well to the ways" the Hebrew gives us the idea of "the proceedings of her house," her house moves a certain way. Cathy and I have been married for over 34 years, we've got grown kids now, we have sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, and we have six grandkids. You know, the thing I find is, you're always a rookie in life, you get married and you think you know what you're doing [I'm laughing real hard right now], and it's six hours before you realize you have no idea what you did at all, when you got married. And then you're trying just to figure that out, and then you find out you're pregnant [or she is], and somebody interrupts, and you're a second-hand citizen now because the baby is everything. And then the second one comes, and you're still on the outside, when the third one comes, you're back in, because then there's more of them than there are of you, and your wife needs you back again, *'Just pick it up and stick it in...I need your help, they're*

driving me crazy,' and then they start to grow up. And then some of them become junior high kids, I remember one of them said "I want Nautica cologne," he told me. I said 'Come with me into the bathroom, I've had this Old Spice for 15 years, you don't need to smell that good, whatever your problem is.' And then they want to date, you know. Then they want to bring someone home. Just all of these things, and in every phase you're still a rookie, you're still learning, there's a proceeding to it, there's a motion to it. Again, I look back, I wouldn't change a day, I wouldn't change a single thing, the hard things, the joys and sorrows, tears, because of what's been learned, it would be chiding against God's wisdom to say "things should have been different." But it says here **'She looketh well, she's observant to the proceedings of her household, she understands, she sees the motion of it.'** remarkable. And in the middle of all of that, as things are moving, it says she doesn't eat the bread of idleness, she's not gossiping, she's not on facebook all day long, not watching soap operas, she's in the middle of this, she's going.

*You Don't Have To Toot Your Own Horn When You're Like
This Woman*

And **verse 28** tells us this, "**Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.**" Now I don't think that necessarily means her kids get up early, it's just the idea they arise, the kids, they arise, and they call her blessed, 'Mom, she's so good.' We see that in life, how many times we see a kid raised without a dad in the home, and they will lay down their lives for their mom, because that mom stepped up to the plate and became mom and dad and provider and did everything for that kid. It never goes unnoticed, never goes unnoticed. It says her children will rise up and call her blessed. Her husband, also, he praises her. Wonderful. You don't have to toot your own horn, when this is the kind of person you are. We know people that want to be Proverbs 31 women and toot their own horn all the time, you don't have to, if you do it right, your kids toot your horn, your husband toots your horn, everybody talks about how wonderful you are.

Heaven Speaks Directly To This Woman

Look, many **“Many daughters have done virtuously,”** that’s our word, “a virtuous woman, who can find?” **“but thou excellest them all.” (verse 29)** What is this verse, and how did it get in there? You understand what just happened in that verse? It just switched to the first person, it’s telling us about this woman all the way through, and it is almost as if God stoops down in this verse, I love the Hebrew too, it says, he steps down and he says, **“Many daughters have done virtuously, but THOU,”** he’s talking to her, whoever this is, he’s saying something to this picture, this woman, heaven speaks directly to the person being described. It’s different from everything else in the acrostic here, in the poem. It’s almost like the LORD stoops over now and looks at her industry, she’s not lazy, what she’s accomplished, what she’s done, the way she’s clothed herself with honour and with strength, she’s not afraid of the future, she takes God at his promises, she opens her mouth with wisdom, the law of kindness is upon her tongue, she looks well to the ways, proceedings of her own household, her children speak of her goodness, her husband praises her, and heaven bends over and says **“Many daughters have done virtuously, but you, you, you excel them all.”** Man, don’t you want heaven to say that over your wife? Now, by the way, when God looks at us, he sees the righteousness of Jesus Christ, he doesn’t see our failings. The wonderful thing is, we can leave here this evening, and say *“Lord, I want to be like that.”* Every man here in this room can leave here, and say *‘Lord, I don’t want to lust after women just because they’re beautiful, I don’t want to wrestle with this all the time, Lord help me to see what I’m supposed to see, help me to understand the virtue and the wonder of the right kind of a woman, help me to look through your eyes, Lord, help me to understand, instead of constantly being worldly, carnal.’* Admitting, *‘Ya, those things need to change,’* every woman here saying, *‘you know what Lord, I want to be like that,’* because we’re under the blood of Christ, there isn’t anything to prove, if it’s any of us from hearing the voice of our Father bend over us, and he says *‘Lots of people have done a good job, you topped them all, you topped them all.’* You want to hear that from our Father, don’t you? We’re able to do that.

*You Can Spend Your Whole Life Trying To Please Other
People, Also Maintaining Beauty Is A Tough god To Bow
Down To*

Verse 30, “Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.” Favour is deceitful, look, it says “the fear of man bringeth a snare” some people are so insecure, look, particularly I think women in this world lay out all these unrealistic standards for themselves, of beauty, of going to the gym, looking a certain way, of being “hot” of being “sexy,” dressing a certain way, of hanging with certain people, you know, look, it says remember this, “Favour is deceitful.” You can live your whole life trying to please other people, it’s a ruse, it’s a deception, you should be trying to please the Invisible One, whose eyes are ever upon your life. Because, favour is deceitful. And some people, look, some of them are just so insecure, they constantly need affirmation, constantly need approval. We need to learn to get that from our Father in heaven, lay down our head on our pillow at night and think *‘Thank you, Father, for this day, thank you for your love, for your peace.’* Favour, can be deceitful, it’s a wonderful thing, we appreciate affirmation, she gets affirmation from her husband and children here. That’s a good thing, but it can be deceitful. And beauty, is vain. Beauty is temporary. And I want to say this about it, beauty is temporary. Let me add this, beauty is temporary, and the last thing I want to say about it and that is that beauty is temporary. It’s a difficult master to serve, because the longer you serve that master, the more and more it demands as time goes on, and you’re fighting a losing battle. And our culture gives us all kinds of, I see these things on TV, just rub it on and all your crows feet go away, made from melon on a field somewhere in Europe, some guy discovered this, and if you rub cantaloupes on your head, you get young again. You see this stuff, it’s a hard master. I think, look, it says here, she wears silk, she wears purple, she doesn’t come home from work, you know, with these big guns and her sweaty flannel shirt on and dirty jeans...no, no, she still looks like a woman, looks good, she’s wearing silk and purple, she’s still attractive to her husband, there isn’t anything wrong with that. But it’s a tough god to bow to. And ladies, you don’t have to worry at all, because, as time goes on, your husband, he doesn’t see as well, doesn’t remember as well. Went out to lunch with Willie

Richardson, great guy who pastors Christian Stronghold, we're sitting and talking, and he's in his late 70s, and he said, *'You know, I tell my wife now, Honey, don't interrupt me, because I might not remember what I was going to say.'* [don't laugh, it's so true] He says *'Sometimes I have something to say, she interrupts me, and I forget what it was.'* ...There's a difference between makeup and countenance. You can look at an older woman, her countenance, she blooms, beautiful, it's something that comes from, that burns from the inside, comes from the inside, beautiful. Again, I don't think there's any excuse for looking frumpy or sloppy, that's not what it's saying here. The idea is, favour, it's deceitful, beauty, it's vain, **“but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised.” (verse 30b)** A virtuous woman, who can find? This is epicenter of a woman that feareth the LORD. Now look, in the Bible, that's never cowering, you're never groveling, *'I'm afraid of God, he's gonna slam me, and burn me, that's why I'm going out to shear the sheep, that's why I'm going to buy a field and plant a vineyard, because if I don't God's gonna slaughter me,'* it's not that kind of fear. It's somebody who wants to walk in his presence and enjoy his presence and please him, that knows his love and knows his grace. And by the end of the day she wants to rest and say to him *'Lord, we had a great day today, didn't we.'* That's a woman that fears the LORD. A woman that fears the LORD, she shall be praised, because beauty is temporary, I forgot to add that. There's an old Swedish proverb that says *“Good looks fail, good cookin' don't.”* I don't know if that's related to anything, just thought I'd share that. **“Favour is deceitful, beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD, she shall be praised. Give her the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.” (verses 30-31)** Look, virtue in through this picture was seen in the everyday experiences of life, she didn't need to be preaching, she didn't need to be on television, she needed to be in her home, with her husband, in life, before the LORD, and the way she rises up, and the way she retires at the end of the day, the things that she gives herself to, taking care of the poor, she's industrious. But she isn't more of a Martha than a Mary, because deep inside, what she's really clothed with is strength and honour, the law of kindness is upon her tongue. She's the kind of woman who walks before the LORD, her children and her husband praise her, they love her, and she realizes, favour is deceitful, beauty, that's vain, but the fear of the LORD, the Bible tells us in Proverbs, is the beginning of wisdom, and in the Book of Psalms. She's going to be

praise, **“Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.” (verse 31)** let her own works praise her in the Pearly Gates, too, at the end of it all, there’s a reward. So, we’ve come to the end of the Book of Proverbs. I encourage you guys really, I try every day to read whatever chapter corresponds to that day of the month, to read through the Book of Proverbs once a month. You know, it’s interesting, Ben Carson, I heard him yesterday, because we promised him when he was here, we’d pray for him, and I encourage you to remember to pray for him [he was in the Presidential Primaries at this time]. They were asking Donald Trump about his favorite Bible verse, and he said ‘*Oh I have lots of them,*’ and they asked Ben Carson, do you have anything specific, and he said ‘*Ya,*’ and he quoted three verses from Proverbs, ***snap!*** from memory, ***snap! snap!*** ‘*These are my favorite verses.*’ The first one was “In all your ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.” “Lean not to thine own understanding” wonderful just to, so, Book of Proverbs, and I know he reads it every morning and rereads the same chapter every night before he goes to bed, and has done for years and years. So we need a President with wisdom. But we need a wise Church, it’s more important, we need a wise Church [greater Body of Christ], we need a wise Church. We need a measure of wisdom that doesn’t come from legislatures, doesn’t come from the Supreme Court, doesn’t come from Washington, it comes demonstrated in the sacrificial lives of God’s people. That will touch a nation, when that’s real, and does what it’s supposed to do. Let’s stand, let’s pray together...[transcript of a connective expository sermon on Proverbs 31:10-31, given by Pastor Joe Focht, Calvary Chapel of Philadelphia, 13500 Philmont Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19116]

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Solomon started Israel’s merchant-marine navy, Jehu destroyed it.
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