Becoming a Capable Wife and a Woman of Noble Character:

6 day Study on Proverbs 31:10-31

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Introduction to the Study:

The following study guide was born out of my own personal study of Proverbs 31:10-31. I kept finding myself asking the question, “How do I become a capable wife?” My husband and I were married at 19 years old for only 6 months prior to his enlistment in the United States Marine Corps. Needless to say, there were various challenges and obstacles I faced as I sought to be a godly wife to my husband and adjust to the stressors of married life as a military spouse. For the past 8 years, I have routinely returned to Proverbs 31 as a means of deeper study of Scripture and understanding of my God-given role as wife and mother.

This study was largely a self-evaluation of my relationships with God, my husband, and my family. My goal was to read through the passage over the course of 5 days, taking 2 to 3 verses at a time, and really digging in to the depth and richness of God’s Word.

My prayer is that at the end of this study, you will not only have grown closer in your relationship with God, but also in your relationships with your spouse (or future spouse) and/or children and come to a deeper understanding of what it means to live as “a woman of noble character,” having contentment and fulfillment as a capable, Proverbs 31 wife.

In Christ’s Love,

Eden Elston
**Day 1**

*Read the following text. Write down at least 4 characteristics or behaviors of the woman in Proverbs 31.*

**Proverbs 31:10-12**

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**Commentary:**

The Proverbs 31 woman is known for seeking the best for her husband. She is not selfishly pursuing her own wants and desires, but sacrificially serving her husband to the glory of God. The phrase “A woman of excellence” found in verse 10 is a Hebrew phrase, “esheth chayil” which is also found in Ruth 2:2; 3:11; 4:11. The word “Chayil” translates to strength (Prov. 31:3) wealth (Gen. 34:29) or courage (1 Samuel 16:18). The Proverbs 31 woman possesses each of these characteristics because her attitude and behaviors are rooted in a faithful relationship with God.

*Read the passages associated with each of the following virtues. Pray for God to reveal to you any blind-spots or weaknesses in your own character, and that He will grant you wisdom and depth of character in each area.*

**Proverbs 31 Virtues to Pray for:**

- **Strength**- energy; efforts (Proverbs 31:3)
- **Courage**- valiant (1 Samuel 16:18)
- **Diligence**- hard-working (Ruth 2:2)
Questions for Contemplation:

1. Do I honor God by seeking the best for my husband? If not, what obstacles are currently preventing me from doing so?

2. In what specific ways am I lacking strength, courage, or diligence?

3. Would those who know me well (especially my husband) refer to me as a “woman of noble character?”

Prayer:

Heavenly Father,
Forgive me when I fail to seek my husband’s best according to Your will. Please grant me the courage to make the changes necessary in my life to live a life of noble character. Grant me the strength and diligence to maintain those changes for the good of my husband.
I pray this in Jesus’ name, Amen.
Day 2

Read the following text. Write down at least 4 characteristics or behaviors of the woman in Proverbs 31.

Proverbs 31:13-15

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Commentary:

The Proverbs 31 woman in these verses is shown to have numerous skills that would have been highly valued in middle eastern culture. Her diligence meant that her family would not lack because of laziness. She would have been highly skilled with a variety of materials used to make cloth. Proverbs 31:13 says she was able to spin flax, a fibrous grass, into thread for weaving into durable cloth, which then could have been sold or made into clothing or textile goods for her family. According to Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary, the Proverbs 31 woman was a,

“…virtuous woman in command of her own spirit and knows how to manage others. (Contrast this with Ezekiel 16:30.) Her husband can confide in her to order all his affairs at home and she is fit to be trusted he is a good husband that will leave it to such a wife to manage for him…she would never do anything willfully to damage his person, family, estate or reputation.”

Read the verses associated with each of the following virtues. Pray for God to reveal to you any blind-spots or weaknesses, and that He will grant you wisdom and depth of character in each area.

Proverbs 31 Virtues to Pray for:

- **Diligence** - hard-working (v.13)
- **Marketable Skills** - (v. 13)
- **Generosity** - (v.15)
- **Compassion** - (v.15)
- **Servant’s heart** - (v.15)

Questions for Contemplation:

1. What are my God-given skills and abilities? How can I better use these skills and abilities to serve my husband/ family?

2. Do I work with willing hands, or with resentment and discontent? Read Colossians 3:23. How do these passages change how I view my daily work?

3. Do I gladly prioritize serving the needs of my family? Why or why not?

Prayer:

Heavenly Father, Forgive me when I fail to see my family as Your precious children made in Your image. Please help me to surrender the things that keep me from working with willing hands- anxieties, frustrations, and expectations- and help me to prioritize the needs of others. Create in me a humble servant’s heart like that of Your Son, Jesus Christ. I pray this in Jesus’ name, Amen.
Day 3

Read the following text. Write down at least 4 characteristics or behaviors of the woman in Proverbs 31.

Proverbs 31:16-19

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Commentary:

• v.17- physical strength and stamina; She is prepared to work hard. “…girds her waist in strength” is a Hebrew expression that depicts tucking one’s tunic into a belt so that it is out of he way during intense activity.

• v. 19- She made linen for her family AND enough to sell for a profit. She first took care of the needs of her own household, and was secondarily entrepreneurial.

• She dealt with prudent management

• She lays up for the “hereafter”

• She looks after her household “that she may oblige all to do their duty 1) to God, and 2) to one another, as well as 3) to her.”

Read the passages associated with each of the following virtues. Pray for God to reveal to you any blind-spots or weaknesses, and that He will grant you wisdom and depth of character in each area.

Proverbs 31 Virtues to Pray for:

• **Strength**- Spiritual and physical (v.17)
• **Wisdom**- God-given intuitive reason (v. 16)
• **Prudence**- essentially practical application of wisdom (v. 18)

Questions for Contemplation:

1. Am I impulsive or do I prudently seek God in my household management?

2. Do I enable my household (and myself) to fulfill our duties (Bible study, prayer, service) to God, and each other? If not, what steps can I take to change?

3. Do I seek to provide for my family? If yes, how? Are my efforts working? Are my efforts sustainable (can I continue in this pattern long-term)?

Prayer:
Heavenly Father,
I confess my own spiritual weakness and sin to You; my failings affect my family’s ability to focus on following You. Forgive me for failing to place You first and to invest in my relationship with You. I pray not just for wisdom in household management but also for prudence to carry out that wisdom. Lord, let me be an encourager and enabler of my family’s faith walks. Please enable me to be of profit first to You, in Your heavenly Kingdom, and secondly to my family. I pray this in Jesus’ name, Amen.
Day 4

Read the following text. Write down at least 4 characteristics or behaviors of the woman in Proverbs 31.

Proverbs 31:20-23

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Commentary:

• v. 13-14; 16-19- The woman finds success in various fields\textsuperscript{viii}

• v. 20- She is generous to the impoverished\textsuperscript{ix}

The picture we begin to see of the woman here is one of great success and generosity. She not only cares for the needs of her own household, but she is able to extend that care and compassion beyond the walls of her home to the poor and needy in her sphere of influence.

Read the passages associated with each of the following virtues. Pray for God to reveal to you any blind-spots or weaknesses, and that He will grant you wisdom and depth of character in each area.

Proverbs 31 Virtues to Pray for:

• **Generosity**- (v.20)

• **Confidence**- (v.21)

• **Virtuosity**- (v.15)
Questions for Contemplation:

1. In what ways am I extending my hands to the poor?

2. Is my responsibility to my family resulting in confidence during tough times? Why or why not?

3. Are my actions and endeavors causing others to view my husband with respect? Are they pointing others to see my relationship with Christ?

4. Am I honoring my husband’s/ family’s reputation by my actions and care for our family?

Prayer:

Father God,
Forgive me when I fail to extend my hand to the poor and needy, and when my actions do not horror my husband and family. Help me to live relying on You, and to live with generosity, confidence in You, and virtuosity in my day to day activities. Thank you for Your rich provision; help me to walk worthy of the calling I’ve received as Your disciple, and as a wife and mother. In Jesus’ Name,
Amen.
Day 5

Read the following text. Write down at least 4 characteristics or behaviors of the woman in Proverbs 31.

Proverbs 31:24-27

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Commentary:

• v. 26- She not only has wisdom, she teaches it. x

• Her excellences are not described of a single individual, but for the God’s Church as a whole. xi

Gary Bredfeldt maintains that in order to be a strong biblical leader, one must primarily be a Bible teacher, sharing the message of Christ through teaching and discipling (doing life together.) xii Presumably, she taught her own children as well as those under her care and supervision within her household. xiii

Read the passages associated with each of the following virtues. Pray for God to reveal to you any blind-spots or weaknesses, and that He will grant you wisdom and depth of character in each area.

Proverbs 31 Virtues to Pray for:

• Strength-
• Honorable-
• Wisdom-
• Faithfulness-
• Usefulness-

Questions for Contemplation:

1. How can I 1) use my skills to further God’s kingdom? 2) draw profit (financial AND spiritual) from my skills?

2. Do I clothe myself with strength and honor? What does this look like in my daily life?

3. Does my speech reflect a heart that is full of “another world” and loving instruction?

4. In which areas of my life am I tempted to let idleness creep in and prevent me from being fruitful?

Prayer:

Father God,
Forgive me when I am content with “good enough.” Place within me a holy discontent for mediocrity in my household, family, and especially my faith. Clothe me, Father, with strength and honor so that I can laugh at the time to come, and bring You glory. Let me be useful to You in Your kingdom here on earth, and fill my heart with Your wisdom and kindness, letting it overflow into loving instruction of others. Let me not be idle, but rather always producing fruit to Your glory!
I pray this in Jesus’ Name, Amen.
Day 6

Read the following text. Write down at least 4 characteristics or behaviors of the woman in Proverbs 31.

**Proverbs 31:28-31**

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**Commentary:**

- v. 28-29- Her family praises her because her excellence surpasses other women. xiv
- V. 25- She is known for her character more than her wardrobe. xv
- V. 30- “Beauty is vain” Hebrew word, “hevel” depicts the fleeting nature of physical beauty; vapor, emptiness, breath xvii (see Ecclesiastes 1:2)
- V. 30- Ultimately, the woman is characterized by her fear of Yahweh. She maintains a pious attitude of obedience toward God and is closely related to wisdom. xvii (see Proverbs 1:7; 2:5; 9:10; 15:33)

Her fear of God is an awe or reverence that expresses itself in loyalty to God and faithfulness to His covenant. Exhibiting trust in Him and obedience to His commandments results in receiving God’s protection, wisdom, and blessing. “Our fear of God is a response to his Holiness. Fear of God reigning in the heart is beauty of the soul, and is everlasting. xvi Because of her relationship with God, she possesses the firmness to bear up under burdens and disappointments.” xix Scripture says that when she is old, she will be able to look back on her life and reflect with great joy that she fulfilled her duty and calling as a wife and mother, serving God, and serving others. “Above praise she receives from her family and friends, she most desires the honor that comes from God and she leaves her works to speak for themselves. From among sinful men, God by His grace, has formed a Church of true believers to be possessers of all the excellences described.” xx

Read the passages associated with each of the following virtues. Pray for God to reveal to you any blind-spots or weaknesses, and that He will grant you wisdom and depth of character in each area.

Proverbs 31 Virtues to Pray for:

• Beloved
• Respected

Questions for Contemplation:

1. Do I seek God’s honor above my own praise? If not, how can I humble myself to seek His blessing over and above the praise of people?

2. Am I too busy comparing myself to other women to focus on living for Christ and loving my family well?

3. How would I characterize my fear of the Lord? Am I living in light of this characterization?

Prayer:

Father God,
Forgive me when I forget your awesomeness. Revive in me a healthy fear of You and let it lead to prudent wisdom. Draw me to Yourself and mold me into a capable, excellent wife fitting of one who claims to worship and follow You. Free me from pride and comparison and lead me into freely living in pursuit of You above all else. Place my primary focus on praising and worshipping You in all I do and let my self-worth be derived from Your opinion of me and not the praise of others.
I pray this in Jesus’ Name, Amen.
Works Cited


Endnotes:

i (Barry, et al. 2016)

ii (Henry 2011)

iii (Barry, et al. 2016)

iv (Barry, et al. 2016)

v (Henry 2011)

vi (Henry 2011)

vii (Henry 2011)

viii (Barry, et al. 2016)

ix (Barry, et al. 2016)

x (Barry, et al. 2016)

xi (Henry 2011)

xii (Bredfeldt 2006)

xiii (Henry 2011)

xiv (Barry, et al. 2016)

xv (Barry, et al. 2016)

xvi (Barry, et al. 2016)

xvii (Barry, et al. 2016)

xviii (Henry 2011)

xix (Henry 2011)

xx (Henry 2011)