

Principles from Proverbs: The Family, Part 4

Focus on the Wife's Role

Introduction: The Book of Proverbs has much to say about the role of women in the contexts of both marriage and society. In addition to extensive teaching concerning positive character attributes of women, Proverbs also warns against the darker side by detailing undesirable character and personality traits. The Proverbs serve as a reality check for the modern women's movement.

I. Godly Attributes of a Good Wife

A. Edifying and Constructive in Attitude and Actions

→Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands. (Proverbs 14:1)

1. Wise women understand their God-given role of edification within the home. In strong marriages, women build up and encourage their husbands and children.
2. Foolish women engage in attitudes and actions that slowly dismantle their homes. Some examples would include a critical spirit, continual complaining, suggestions that their husband is inadequate in some way, and being discontent.

B. A Gracious Spirit

→A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong men retain riches. (Proverbs 11:16)

1. Women gain honor and respect by maintaining a gracious spirit, not by griping and demanding.
2. A gracious spirit involves kindness, politeness, a servant's heart, and a desire to perfect herself in her role for the sake of others. Gracious women are strong women who maintain an attitude of meekness.

C. Trustworthy

→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. (Proverbs 31:11, 12)

1. The virtuous woman gains the absolute confidence of her husband. His heart safely trusts in her because she never disappoints or betrays.
2. Specifically, the verse addresses financial matters. Because the wife is trustworthy with money, the husband will "have no need

of spoil.” In other words, his wife’s frugality will allow the family to live on his regular income, apart from periodic financial aid or a windfall.

3. The virtuous woman’s goal in life is to do her husband “good” all the days of her life. She always has his best interests at heart.

D. Supportive of Her Husband’s Dreams and Goals

→**Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. (Proverbs 31:23)**

1. A woman can make or break her husband’s success. Successful men generally have supportive wives.
2. A man will generally rise as high as his wife permits and promotes. Many men have found success elusive because of wives who hold them back by encumbering them with secondary concerns.
3. A man’s reputation among his peers is either augmented or diminished by the actions/attitudes of his wife.

E. Careful for the Needs of Her Family

→**She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens. (Proverbs 31:15)**

1. Sleep needs are secondary to the needs of her family. A virtuous woman gets up early!
2. Virtuous women take minimal concern for their personal comfort, preferring instead to meet the needs of others—often their inferiors.

→**She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. (Proverbs 31:27)**

1. The virtuous woman makes adequate plans for every eventuality. In Proverbs 31:21, she does not fear cold weather, because she has met the clothing needs.
2. The virtuous woman is always busy with details of the household. While moments of relaxation may be found during the day, her daily schedule is a whirlwind of activity—centering around her home, husband, and children.

F. Classy and Stylish

→**She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. (Proverbs 31:22)**