

Our Bible Sisters:

The Proverbs 31 Woman – Setting God-Pleasing Goals for Your Life

Participant's Guide

This Bible study was written by Marilyn Miller,
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content was reviewed by Professor-emeritus Joel Gerlach.

*Our Bible Sisters is a series of one-hour studies that may be used
separately or in any combination. Each looks at a different woman of the
Bible, highlighting God's faithfulness in her life, with applications to the lives
of all Christian women today.*

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Opening Prayer

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight.” – I Peter 3:3-4.

Our study today will define this in more detail.

1. Read Proverbs 1:2-4. What is the purpose of the book of Proverbs?
2. Read Proverbs 31:1 and 10-31. This portion of Proverbs is attributed to King Lemuel. We do not know for certain who King Lemuel is; however, ancient rabbis considered this to be a pen name taken by Solomon. The description of the ideal woman is a message directed to King Lemuel by his mother, describing what he should look for in a woman he wishes to take as a wife. A woman fitting this description is indeed rare and someone to be greatly treasured. She is a true gift from God.
3. Let's discover some of the things about the character of the Proverbs woman. What do we learn about the source of her strength from vs 25? What impact does this have on her?
4. What do we learn about the way she speaks from vs 26?
5. Now let's discover something about the labors of the Proverbs woman. She is both a homemaker and a business woman. The two do not have to be at odds with each other as long as both are surrendered to God. Work is a blessing from God, whether parenting, working in the business world, homemaking or providing a service. What do we learn about:

Her attitude toward work from vs 13?

The quality of what she does from vs 14?

Her preparedness from vs 15, 19, 21?

Being an economic asset to her family in vs 16 and 24?

How she cares for herself from vs 17 and 22?

6. All women have relationships to manage and our Proverbs woman is no different. God made us to be social and has given us the ability to communicate. Because of her relationship with God, she is able to manage all of the relationships in her life. What do we learn about her:

Relationship with her husband from vs 11-12, 23?

Heart for serving from vs 20?

Relationship with God from vs 30?

7. From vs 28-31, how could anyone begin to live this type of life? What are the rewards that result?
8. If we look at the Proverbs 31 woman and say there's no way any woman could ever be like this, we're defeating ourselves. If we look at her as what God wants women to develop into, then we can find the grace to begin the journey. The first step in change is not gritting our teeth and trying harder to be perfect. It's not about commitment. It's about surrendering to Christ. Surrendering is admitting that we cannot do this with our own strength; we must have God's help. How can each of these passages help us lean on Christ instead of going it alone?

- Galatians 2:20

- Isaiah 64:6-8

- Ephesians 1:3

- Philippians 4:13

- 1 Thessalonians 5:24

- 2 Peter 1:3

You might want to write down one of these passages, or another one, that you feel will help you remember this fundamental truth – that the Proverbs 31 woman is what God

wants us to become and we can do this with his help. Post it where you will see it regularly and include it in your prayers.

9. Read Proverbs 31:10-31 again. Looking back over your life, short or long, how can you see God at work in one of these areas? In which would you like to especially grow in the year ahead?

- Development of your character?
- Your labor or work?
- Your relationships?
- Your spiritual life?

For further personal study:

Keeping a journal may be a useful tool. In your personal time over the next days, ask God to lead you as you look at yourself honestly. Use these questions and search the Scriptures to find additional verses to help you grow:

- What do I need to change in my priorities or my attitude?
- Where do I need to ask for forgiveness?
- What should I begin doing or quit doing?
- What changes do I need to make to my worship, devotion and prayer life to be a woman who truly fears the Lord?

Closing Prayer/Meditation

Brothers, Sisters, Let Us Gladly CW 484 vs. 1

*Brothers, sisters, let us gladly
Give to God our all, our best—
Service hearty, thorough, honest,
With a living love impressed.
All our duty, all our striving,
All our time to him belong;
Praise him, then, with true devotion;
Come before him with a song.*

References:

Barber/Rasnake/Shepherd. Life Principles from the Women of the Bible
Ehlke, Roland Cap. People's Bible Commentary - Proverbs
Lockyer, Herbert. All the Women of the Bible