

Biblical Marriage Study

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Study #4

What the Bible says about the wife's role in marriage.

Let's start by having someone volunteer to read Proverbs 18:22.

What are the two points made here?

He who finds a wife finds what is good.

He receives favor from the Lord.

Why do you think the man who finds a good wife finds favor from the Lord?

God created man and woman to unity and the marriage completes that unit.

In a good marriage there is the witness of each of the spouses plus the witness of the couple which illustrates the most powerful possible relationship between two people under God's power and authority.

What is the perfect model for the Christian to pattern life by?

Jesus. He came and modeled for us how to live a spiritually perfect life. So we look to Jesus to determine how we should live a godly life.

Let's focus on the wife of the marriage team. Proverbs 31:10-31 describes the ideal wife. Let's look at this description and discuss each trait described. Would someone please read Proverbs 31:10-31?

In verse 10, the Hebrew word for *noble character* is *hayil* which relates to strength of character. Appropriate English synonyms are virtuous or good. What is the contemporary meaning of virtuous?

It is a process both of thought and act. It includes thinking good thoughts as well as living life in a good way.

What is the opposite of virtuous or good?

Evil

In scriptural terms, how would a virtuous person act?

They would be righteous in the eyes of God and do right according to God's will. A virtuous person would avoid even the "appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22 KJV).

What value does verse 10 place on a good wife?

More precious than rubies. Jewels/riches/wealth.

Why is a good wife of such value?

She completes her husband. According to Genesis 2:20b, God determined that Adam needed a helpmate, and provided for this need by creating Eve.

Apparently a good wife provides some things that wealth can not buy. What might these things be?

A good wife is a reliable, predictable, and trustworthy helpmate. She becomes one physically and in spirit with her husband. If they are a good team, their unit will result in creativity that they could not produce separately. They become a team that is worth more than riches. Each is completed by the other. They are on the same side and bring out the best in each other.

What is the meaning of verse 11 “her husband has full confidence in her?”

He has confidence in her ability to manage things. She can be trusted. She will be such an asset that their fortune will grow. (A study of the destructive factors to marriage reveals the things which destroy trust are abuses of money, adultery, etc. We must be able to trust each other.)

How would you interpret verse 12?

Life is easier with a good helpmate. Life is extended, more meaningful, and more fruitful.

What is the importance of verse 13?

She searches for good things to add creatively/productively to their life. She is a positive, accepting member of the team.

What the NIV calls “eager hands” can also reflect a “willing spirit.” What are some practical things that the husband can do to encourage a wife’s willing spirit?

Be committed to her, meet her needs, share with her so she truly feels as one with him.

Let’s look at the remaining verses in turn for meaning and application to life in our contemporary world. Verse 14?

She does not limit herself to what is at hand/available. She extends herself for resources.

Verse 15?

She rises early/plans ahead to provide food for her family. She organizes and manages her household.

Verse 16?

She invests and is productive.

Verse 17?

She keeps herself physically fit, strong, and healthy.

Verse 18?

She perceives that she is productive. She sacrifices to manage her home.

Verse 19?

Probably applies to the tedious work of spinning and weaving which requires patience...as does managing a home and raising children.

Verse 20?

She practices hospitality, ministers to the needs of others, and goes out of her way to help others. She is not a selfish person with her time or resources.

Verse 21? The idea here is “warm clothing” of double thickness.

When winter comes her family’s clothes are ready.

Verse 22?

She clothes her home and herself attractively, looks good.

Verse 23?

She is such a good wife that her husband is admired and respected for her qualities.

Verse 24?

She is productive in a physical sense.

Verse 25?

She is unafraid of the future. She is confident/secure in life because of her inner strength and values.

Verse 26?

Her words testify to her wisdom. She teaches/models to others.

Verse 27?

She is aware of and manages her household. She doesn’t waste time, isn’t lazy.

Verses 28 and 29?

Her children and husband testify to the blessing she is to them.

How do you think the husband’s praise in verse 29 affects the wife?

Verse 30?

The most important aspect of the life of this woman is that she is a godly person who lives for the Lord.

Verse 31?

She deserves and should receive physical reward from the fruit of her labor. She is recognized for her good works.

What kind of woman does Proverbs 31 describe?

The perfect one. This is a description of the model wife over her lifetime.

How is this relevant to the average woman?

A criterion. A standard to grow to.

What can a woman do about those areas in which she does not measure up?

Pick one attribute to work on, changing her life.

One practical thing women can do is to memorize Scriptures relating to the areas in which they struggle. When one senses the first negative thought or feeling related to those areas, quote the Scriptures, asking God for help and strength. And by an act of the will, reject the negative thought or feeling...and thus be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.

Next week we will focus on the role of the husband.