

# A Woman of Virtue

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Proverbs 31:10-31

In our previous lesson, we looked at the man of integrity (Job 31). This passage is about the virtuous woman. She is valuable and worthy of praise. We are going to see what we can learn from her example.

## How NOT to View This Description

- As an unattainable ideal – ideal, yes; but not unattainable (similar to the description in Job 31); the Bible repeatedly calls us to a higher standard
- As a “career woman” – many argue for women doing secular work instead of being homemakers; they try to use this passage as “proof” that women can work outside the home; a woman can work outside the home, though it is not easy without neglecting her other responsibilities; however, the woman of Proverbs 31 did NOT have a “job” outside of the home
- As only being for married women – yes, the woman in Proverbs 31 was married and had children; not all women will be in the same situation; but they can have the same character, work ethic, and outlook

## Her Character

- She is trustworthy (Proverbs 31:11) – her husband has learned that he can trust her; this is after years (cf. Proverbs 20:6)
- She is consistent (Proverbs 31:12) – does good all her life; we earn a reputation by consistency (cf. 1 Timothy 5:10)
- She is benevolent (Proverbs 31:20) – example of Tabitha/Dorcas (Acts 9:36, 39); more than just giving money to charity
- She speaks words of wisdom and kindness (Proverbs 31:26) – our speech is important (Ephesians 4:29)
- She fears the Lord (Proverbs 31:30) – this is necessary to fulfill our purpose in life (Ecclesiastes 12:13); this is the key to everything about her; this is why she does what she does; it is what makes it all possible

## Her Work Ethic

- She works with her hands in delight (Proverbs 31:13, 19) – we are to work with our might (Ecclesiastes 9:10); she does this with joy
- She is not primarily concerned with convenience (Proverbs 31:14) – she wants what is best for her household
- She oversees what is done in the home (Proverbs 31:15) – she makes sure needs are met and tasks are assigned; this does not mean she is usurping her husband’s

authority (cf. Ephesians 5:22, 24; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:1); instead, this is part of her role as a help meet (Genesis 2:18)

- She makes herself strong (Proverbs 31:17) – this is so she can carry out the tasks she has
- She is not idle (Proverbs 31:27) – idleness is destructive (Proverbs 18:9; 19:15); idleness provides opportunities to get into trouble (1 Timothy 5:13-14; Proverbs 7:10-12, 19)

## **Her Outlook**

- She sees the good in her efforts (Proverbs 31:18) – her efforts are aligned with her purpose (to fear God, to fill her role)
- She plans ahead for the future (Proverbs 31:21-22) – there are seasons in life; we need to prepare (cf. Proverbs 20:4)
- She is optimistic (Proverbs 31:25) – this does not mean she is naive about the possibility of trials and hardships; but with proper planning, hard work, stewardship, priorities, and trust in God, the future is bright
- She focuses on her household (Proverbs 31:27) – this is the role God has given her (Titus 2:5)

## **Her Value**

- Her worth is far above jewels (Proverbs 31:10) – “crown of her husband” (Proverbs 12:4); this is a favor from God (Proverbs 18:22)
- Her efforts make her husband’s success possible (Proverbs 31:23) – he can trust her, so he can focus on his work; this allows him to build a good reputation
- She contributes to the household (Proverbs 31:24) – this complements her primary work, not competes with it
- She is worthy of praise (Proverbs 31:28-29, 31) – not treated as a slave (cf. Luke 17:9); appreciation is stated; everyone needs positive reinforcement (Proverbs 12:25)

## **Conclusion**

- The wise man described a lot about this woman – her character, work ethic, outlook, and value
- The foundation for all of it was her fear of God – this needs to be the foundation for everything we do