

In Pursuit Of Proverbs 31 Complete Bible Study

Complete Revised Edition

2010

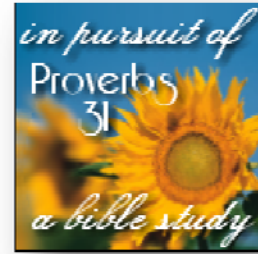


Women have been the target of some outrageous media propaganda that sets our flesh racing in the wrong direction and so we turn to the church where we receive conflicting views on biblical truths. No wonder we are so befuddled when it comes to our roles as Christ-following women. Even within Christianity there are views that encompass from one end of the spectrum to the other. So what's a girl to do? There are many women who are fascinated with and at the same time terrified of the woman in Proverbs 31. I was one of those women. This study is for us.

In Pursuit of Proverbs 31 Bible Study Introduction

I have been pondering the questions that have plagued the hearts and minds of so many:

- Why can't I get it right?
- How can I find more time to get it all done?
- Why isn't God helping me?



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As I read and meditated on the scriptures then tried to apply them to my life something odd happened. I became filled with anger, bitterness, anxiety, and was more overwhelmed than I had ever been before. When I heard other women speak about all the Proverbs 31 guidelines they had achieved I would feel myself cringe inside. Why was I different? Why couldn't I just "get it?"

Have you ever felt this way?

If you have then I pray that this bible study will be a source of encouragement to you and strengthen your walk with God. It may not always be easy because we will have to retrain our patterns of thought and overcome some mindsets we may have formed. You may even have to unlearn some things you have been taught in the past. This bible study is not "typical" of what you will find in the majority of books, articles, and posts written on the scriptures in Proverbs 31. Instead, it is a look into the heart of God and the reality of those scriptures in the bible.

I ask that you stop now and pray:

Father, there is none like you. Your name is above every other name and to you every knee will bow. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be a woman in this time and in this place. Thank you for being the perfect example of how to serve my family and friends. I desire to do your will for my life. Help me to see things the way you see them and please cleanse and soften my heart to receive teachings from your word. I repent for any wrong and destructive thought patterns I may have and I ask that you transform my mind to accomplish your desire for my life. Forgive me for any negative emotions that I may have entertained. Give me the revelation that I need each and every day to become more like you and less like my worldly self. Please keep me from the plans of Satan and deliver me from those who wish me harm. Amen.

But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 14:26 kjv

God speaks to each and every one of us on a daily basis. We must learn to hear him and obey. Much the same way a mother teaches her children because she knows better, God teaches us because he knows all things and his will is for us to prosper and be in good health and no, I am not referring to money. I would much rather prosper in my day to day life. I can make money at anytime but I can't buy the lessons that my Father teaches me.

Scripture references: Hebrews 12:25, Matthew 4:4, Deuteronomy 30:10, Acts 5:29, 3 John 1:2

This 10 week study will consist of the following:

1. Proverbs 31 - Shattering the Myths
2. The True Woman of Proverbs 31
3. Proverbs 31 on Relationship With God
4. Proverbs 31 on Being a Wife
5. Proverbs 31 on Being a Mother
6. Proverbs 31 on Management
7. Proverbs 31 on Resourcefulness
8. Proverbs 31 on Ministry
9. Proverbs 31 on Matters of the Soul
10. Proverbs 31 and YOU!!

Before beginning this study I would like for you to answer the following thought provoking questions:

- What do you hope to get out of this bible study?
- What, if anything, has prevented you from studying these scriptures in the past?
- What have you found helpful or frustrating about living out these scriptures?

In Pursuit of Proverbs 31 Bible Study Part 1 – Shattering the Myths

By: Amy Bayliss / Copyright 2008

I am so eager to get into the nuts and bolts of this chapter in Proverbs but before we do I feel it is necessary to start with a clean slate. In order for that to happen we have to undo some of what we may have assumed or been taught.

To begin: Read the entire Proverbs 31 chapter. Not just verses 10-31 but the whole thing.

Let's get myth number one out of the way:

1. Proverbs 31 was written about a compilation of women.

It is believed by some that because Proverbs 31 is widely accepted by scholars to be written by Bathsheba, mother of Solomon that these verses must speak of several women since Solomon was wed to several women. This is false.

Proverbs 31:10 - *Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price [is] far above rubies.*

The original Hebrew word translated to "woman" was *'ishsha*, which means:

woman, wife, female

a) woman (opposite of man) b) wife (woman married to a man) c) female (of animals) d) each, every (pronoun)

It does not state nor is it implied to be plural. So this is the singular form of the word. I looked this up using my concordance. If you don't have a concordance then there are many online tools that can help you. Blue Letter Bible is one of them.

For this particular bible study you will need the following things:

1. bible
2. colored pencils for highlighting
3. pen
4. notebook (if you prefer not to write in your bible)
5. concordance (hard copy or online)
6. coffee/tea (optional) :)

What comes to mind is the 3rd chapter of John, verses 1-7, when Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus about entering into the kingdom of God and he said to him in verse 3:

Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.



and Nicodemus replied in verse 4:

Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?

Nicodemus naturally assumed that being born again was a physical thing and automatically deemed it an impossible task. I can just imagine Jesus smiling and saying, "Hold on. Hold on. Don't get too overwhelmed. This is a spiritual thing. Let me help you."

I'm sure that we are all like Nicodemus in many ways, especially with regard to our natural assumptions. The first time I read Proverbs 31 I decided to go at it full force. I even wrote a bible study then about how to achieve each task, verse by verse, and presented it to my ladies group. I made charts and goal lists and set out to accomplish them every day. I lasted less than a week before I got burnt out. It was hard work and the way I set out to do it went against so much of who I was. I tried to read the chapter again months later and I got half way through it and threw my hands up and said, "I give up. God if you want me to be like this woman then you will have to show me exactly how to do it." I promise that I heard him giggle at me as if to say, "Finally!"

What God did first is reveal the truth to me just as he did for Nicodemus in verse 5:

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

What God revealed through His word is that unless our ultimate pursuit is of Him then we cannot physically accomplish anything and still honor Him. Any other successes, apart from our pursuit of Him, is of the flesh; selfish; and prideful. So, I could accomplish my goals and tasks using my own will power, persistence, and ambition but it would not be unto God which defeats the purpose.

Let's pray:

Father, you are the love of my life; the one true love that adores me even with all of my faults. I want to honor you. I want to bring glory to your name for your sake. If I have sinned, Father, I ask your forgiveness and I know that you are faithful and just to forgive me. I pray that as I read your word today that you would give me revelation intended for me to apply to my life to glorify you. I ask that you break any strongholds that may be attached to my thinking and make me new. I pray for a refreshing from your word. Open the eyes of my heart. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

Open your bible to Matthew 6:33. *Read it out loud.*

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Highlight it. Now go back and read the entire chapter so that you get a full context of God's word and meaning here while keeping in mind the verses of Proverbs 31. Go ahead and read it then come back. I'll wait. :)

Done? Good. Any aha moments? Write them down! I prefer to write them in my bible and only write the major PoW (pearls of wisdom) in my notebook. You do it how you feel most comfortable. The important thing is that you write down the revelation and thoughts God gave to you. We will discuss them later.

"Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it." Habakkuk 2:2

The second myth we can shatter is:

2. The Proverbs 31 was an actual wife at that time.

These passages in Proverbs 31 came from the heart of a mother; the heart of a woman. It was her spoken desire *for* her son's life *to* her son. She was advising him and we will see that if we read the entire chapter from verse one. She was not speaking of a current wife. Proverbs is known as the book of wisdom. I'm sure when this book was compiled it was believed to be appropriate to include the wise words from this loving mother and to think that all of this time we have been comparing ourselves to a vision, some other woman's hope. No wonder we couldn't measure up!

I remember about a year ago when God had me write a special prayer for the woman who would one day be the wife of one of my sons. I remember wanting to ask for specific things like: a good cook, a great housekeeper, a woman with great talent that is utilized, a woman who loves children and is patient with them, a woman who.... Okay, okay. A woman with mad skills sums it up. Do you see what I did here? I asked God to bless my sons with the desires of my heart. This is what I wished I could give them on a consistent basis.

Proverbs 31 is what is known as an acrostic. Each line begins with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. It is poetry written by a loving mother to her son which brings us to our third myth.

3. Proverbs 31 is a set of guidelines or a "to do" list for Christian women.

Not everything recorded in the bible should be interpreted as literal guidelines, especially the books of wisdom. The majority of it is to allow us to learn from example. The example we should focus on here is the thoughts from the heart of a woman. If scholars are correct and the mother who wrote it is Bathsheba, then it should be easy to see why her heart would yearn for so much for her son.

God reveals Himself to us spiritually. If we put our effort into growing our relationship with Him then we will develop a deeper understanding of who He is and what He is showing us through His word.

If you are looking for guidelines for Christian women then they can be found in many other places in the bible.

Titus 2:3-5 "Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good, so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored."

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Ephesians 5:22 "Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord."

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Proverbs 14:1 "The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish tears it down with her own hands."

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1 Peter 3:1 "Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. 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. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear."

I challenge you to find any other scripture that dictates that a woman must sew or knit to be righteous and upright before God. It isn't there. That doesn't mean that we can't desire the same thing. It just means it isn't mandated. These words in Proverbs 31 were the desires of Bathsheba's heart just like most of Psalms were the desires of David's heart. In the next lesson we'll talk about why God purposed for us to study these scriptures in Proverbs 31 and how we can use them in our lives. They are not irrelevant just because they aren't guidelines. God has a reason for revealing the hearts of others to us through the bible. These passages do have a powerful significance and should be of great importance in our lives. In the next lesson, we'll discuss who she is and why she is so important to us.

Get your posts done, link your post to Mr. Linky, and leave me a comment letting me know that you have done it. I'm excited to see what God revealed to you and I'll see you next week!

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. John 3:6-7

## **In Pursuit of Proverbs 31 Bible Study Part 2 - Shattering the Myths**

### **Focused Thoughts:**

1. Proverbs 31 is not about a compilation of women, is not an actual wife, and is not a set of guidelines or a "to do" list for Christian women.
2. We cannot believe our natural assumptions when reading scriptures are the right ones. We must consult with God, study, and pray to receive revelation.
3. Proverbs 31 is a spiritual lesson.

### **Scripture for Memory:**

#### **John 5:30**

I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.

### **Write It Down (or post it):**

Be sure to record your revelation and thoughts in your bible, notebook, or let us all share in what you are learning and write a post about it and link it here! I'd love to know what God revealed to you while reading Matthew 6. I'll even post my own thoughts and notes later in the week.

### **For Study Purposes:**

- Look up the words: virtuous (vs.10), household (vs. 15), and feareth (vs. 30) in the concordance.
- Find two other scriptures that are guidelines for women.
- List three things about Lemuel's mother that you have learned from reading these scriptures.
- Questions to ponder: What is the one verse in Proverbs 31:11-28 that you would most like to accomplish? Who do you personally know that you would consider a true Proverbs 31 woman? Tell us about her. Why do you see her as a true Proverbs 31 woman?