

## A Private Conversation Made Public

This article will be focusing upon a mother who had a “come sit with me and listen” moment with her son. He is unique because he is a king. Today’s minute is going to dive into their private conversation; a conversation that God decided to make public through the authorship of King Lemuel himself in the book of Proverbs.

There are Bible scholars who believe that King Lemuel could be another name for King Solomon. If that be the case, the mother in this chapter is Bathsheba. Whether or not this is a correct assumption, we can know from this passage the son was receiving sound advice from his mother and he acknowledges it through his own written word inspired by God (2 Timothy 3:16).

The discussion between the two is found in Proverbs 31. The wisdom of the king’s mother is apparent in the fact she took the time to teach her son how to make wise decisions. The chapter begins with a discussion concerning the dangers of immorality. She explains that he need not “waste his strength on women” because oftentimes women destroy kings’ morality. She explains the dangers of drinking strong drink – how it “causes one to forget the laws.” She also discusses the importance of true justice by encouraging him to “speak up for those who are poor” and to “stand up for what he knows to be right.”

The advice she gave was substantiated by providing the reasons for the advice she gave. This is a valuable example for us to use when teaching our children. Teaching a rule is good but providing the reason for the rule establishes a deeper understanding of the “do’s and don’ts” that must be taught. By learning the reason behind the rule one can then “stand on his own two feet” when he must make decisions on his own.

The remainder of the chapter focuses upon how to select a wife. His mother explains he needs to find a virtuous woman. She knew the importance of selecting the right kind of woman to help him be the right kind of king. She understood that her son needed her experience and wisdom concerning this matter; thus, she took the time to teach him.

This brings up a couple of questions for us today: Are we teaching our young men how to select a virtuous wife? Are our young women learning how to be virtuous women? Hopefully, we are following the good example of this godly mother, a God-fearing woman, who understood the importance of teaching this lesson to her child (Proverbs 31:2).

Proverbs 31 is not a chapter that teaches specific “do’s and don’ts” that a virtuous wife must do - or not do. Rather, it is a chapter that teaches the kind of character one will have if she is a virtuous woman. For instance, does the woman in your household, or your mother, “always gather wool and flax,” (Proverbs 31:13)? Does she “make her own thread and weave her clothes,” (Proverbs 31:19)? Most likely you answered no. This is because we no longer need to gather wool and flax to fulfill this specific character trait. We no longer need to make our own thread and weave our clothes because we can go to a ready-made store and purchase these items. From this teaching we understand one of the character traits of a virtuous woman is that she will be one who makes sure her family has clothing to wear for each season of the year.

What does it mean to be virtuous? Have you ever heard of men of valor? This refers to the soldiers who are strong, brave, and willing to face whatever danger comes their way. Valor is a synonym for virtuous. God describes a godly wife as virtuous. As I am writing this message, I am in eyes' view of a bowl of "M & M's." How perfect! A virtuous woman could be described as an "M & M." Her nature is to be sweet, soft on the inside and strong on the outside.

In conclusion: May women in our community put into practice the character traits of virtuous women and may their husbands support this role, allowing God to bless our homes as well as the future homes of our children.

On January 23<sup>rd</sup> we had corresponding lessons on the topic of a woman's role in the home. Check our website for sermons titled "Adam's 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday Present (1 Peter 3.1-7)" from the AM service and "The Wife's Role in the Home (Titus 2)" from the PM service. Also, you can find our worship services on our Facebook page.