



SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Speaker: Chris & Erin Royalty // Sunday: June 4, 2023

- 1) Begin your time by briefly praying and asking the Holy Spirit to help you as you discuss and study.
- 2) Read Proverbs 31:10-31 together.

Commentary Insight

In short, the original intended audience was not young women (“this is what kind of wife you should be”) but young men (“this is what kind of wife you should get”). This does not mean that the poem cannot be used to instruct women, but the interpreter must recognize its primary objective. Although it may seem strange that a wisdom poem on the virtues of a good wife should be directed at young men, it is in keeping with the whole thrust of Proverbs. The book everywhere addresses the young man (“my son”) and not the young woman. It expounds in great detail on evils of the prostitute and how she is a snare for a young man; it says nothing about lusty boys and the threats they pose for young women. It is a false reading, however, to suppose that biblical wisdom despises women or views them as fundamentally corrupt (this poem alone contradicts that notion). There is no double standard; the gender slant in Proverbs is a matter of audience orientation rather than ideological bias. Proverbs directs the reader away from the prostitute and toward the good wife because its implied reader is a young man. For the same reason, Wisdom is personified as a woman and not as a man.⁵

Duane A. Garrett, *Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*, vol. 14, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1993), 248–249.

- 3) What stuck out to you as you read? Is there anything you don't understand? Is there anything you'd like to discuss?
- 4) How do wives and mothers reflect the glory of God?
- 5) How can wives and mothers guard against being crushed by the ideal woman?
- 6) Why do you think motherhood is such a disputed topic in Western culture?

- 7) If you are a wife and/or mother, which characteristics from this passage are most challenging to you?
- 8) If you are a wife and/or mother, where do you see the grace of God forming you into the character of this excellent woman?
- 9) If you are a husband, how can you honor the women (wife and daughters) in your life as they strive to be faithful to the role to which God has called them?
- 10) What aspects of the wife and mother of Proverbs 31 are abused or ignored by those who reject the distinction between man and woman as designed by God?
- 11) What aspects of the wife and mother of Proverbs 31 are abused or ignored by those who demean women and relegate them to secondary status?
- 12) How does the gospel of Jesus Christ empower us to live faithfully in the roles to which God has called us?
- 13) End your time in prayer. Ask God to help you apply the things you've discussed and learned during this time of study.

** Most of these questions taken from: Jonathan Akin, [Exalting Jesus in Proverbs](#), ed. David Platt, Daniel L. Akin, and Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2017), 181.*