

The Proverbs 31 Family
Pastor Deborah Oakley - GFC 5/11/25

We have preached many Mother's Day sermons and some of them have been based on Proverbs 31 talking about the Proverbs 31 woman. Today I am going to preach from Proverbs 31 – but we're not going to talk just about the Proverbs 31 woman. The title of this sermon is The Proverbs 31 Family and we're going to look at this Scripture and discover the characteristics of this blessed family.

Before we do – I just want to say that this word is for you – whether you are married or not – whether you have children or not – every Christian needs the characteristics we will talk about today. Proverbs 31:10-30 says:

Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. The heart of her husband safely trusts her; so he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil all the days of her life.

She seeks wool and flax, and willingly works with her hands. She is like the merchant ships, she brings her food from afar. She also rises while it is yet night, and provides food for her household, and a portion for her maidservants. She considers a field and buys it; from her profits she plants a vineyard.

She girds herself with strength, and strengthens her arms. She perceives that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out by night...

She extends her hand to the poor, yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy. She is not afraid of snow for her household, for all her household is clothed with scarlet.

She makes tapestry for herself; her clothing is fine linen and purple. Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders...

She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants. Strength and honor are her clothing; she shall rejoice in time to come.

She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness. She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: "Many daughters have done well, but you excel them all." Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.

We see many characteristics of a virtuous woman in this passage. She is:

Trustworthy	Hard-working	Wise	Godly
Praiseworthy	Caring and Kind	And she is rare!	

We also see many characteristics of a godly man in this passage. He:

Has a good reputation	Has wisdom	Has authority
Trusts his wife	Praises his wife	

And men – I want to say this to you today: If you want a Proverbs 31 woman, be a Proverbs 31 man! Now you might say, “I’ll be that kind of man when she becomes that kind of woman.” But I want you to know God wants you to be the leader in your household and being a leader doesn’t mean bossing everyone around – it means to go first! So be a leader and become a Proverbs 31 man and watch how your family becomes a Proverbs 31 family!

Today I want to look at three characteristics of the Proverbs 31 Family.

1. A Proverbs 31 Family Has a Culture of Honor

Verse 25 says ***Strength and honor are her clothing.***

I want you to understand that there is power in honor. In fact, honor releases the power and blessing of God and lack of honor will quench the Spirit of God and the power of God. This happened to Jesus in His hometown where everyone knew Him. Mark 6:1-6 says:

Jesus left there and went to His hometown, accompanied by His disciples. When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue, and many who heard Him were amazed.

"Where did this man get these things?" they asked. "What's this wisdom that has been given Him, that He even does miracles! Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown, among his relatives and in his own house is a prophet without honor." He could not do any miracles there, except lay His hands on a few sick people and heal them. And He was amazed at their lack of faith.

Notice it says Jesus COULD NOT do any miracles there. Not WOULD not, not DID not, but COULD not. Jesus was not holding back. His miraculous power was restrained. Why? Because of unbelief which was caused by a lack of honor.

We’re all aware how lack of faith will hinder the power of God; so will lack of honor. Lack of honor will restrain the power of God. Honor will release the power of God. Dishonor will quench God’s blessings - Honor releases God’s blessings. Obviously, honor is important. And notice where it is most absent: AT HOME!

And here we are crying out for God’s power and blessing in our families, but could it be that the power of God is being hindered by lack of honor? In order to be Proverbs 31 families, we must realize that and reverse that!

The word honor means to value, to esteem highly, to view as important, to respect. The opposite of honor is dishonor. It means “to treat with disrespect, to treat as common or ordinary or unimportant; to not value.”

The more we honor someone, the more we will treat them as someone we value and respect. That will be seen in our actions and words. The less we honor someone, the more we will treat them with disrespect. That will be seen in our actions and words.

Everywhere you look at our culture there is a lack of respect. It wasn't always this bad. When Pastor Joe and I met there was still a culture of honor.

Children honored their parents.

Students honored teachers.

Husbands and wives honored each other.

Men held doors opened for women.

People said please and thank you.

People honored their leaders: pastors, teachers, policemen, and bosses.

Now, our culture leans more toward disrespect.

Children talk back to their parents.

Students disrespect their teachers.

Employees disrespect their bosses.

Husbands and wives dishonor each other.

Dishonor is rampant in our society. I think it started when people started removing God from the culture. When you disrespect God, it will filter down to where you disrespect every other authority figure. But God commands us to honor those He puts in authority. Romans 13:1-2 says:

Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.

We see several truths here:

- Every person is under some type of authority and will be until they die.
- Authority is a God-thing, not a man-made thing.
- God puts people in authority.
- By honoring authority, we honor God. By dishonoring authority, we dishonor God.
- Authority is meant to work for our good and blessing.
And you only receive that blessing when you honor those in authority.
Otherwise, you can end up in a heap of trouble.

When I met pastor Joe at 16 years of age...I knew NOTHING about honor. I talked back to my parents; I rolled my eyes at my teachers and would argue with them continuously. I didn't want anyone to tell me what to do. I had no honor for anyone. One day my history teacher had enough. I was standing in class disrespectfully yelling at him and he threw a book at me and hit me in the head.

I was suspended for insubordination. Why am I telling you this? Because I want you to know that if you struggle with dishonoring others, you can overcome it. God wants you to overcome it. And that means even honoring those that throw the book at you so to speak. We are to honor who God tells us to honor... the good ones and the bad ones.

Today in America, we submit only if we agree or if we respect the person. That's not a kingdom view. We can even unintentionally teach our children to be disrespectful. For example: Johnny comes home from school and tells you he got into trouble because he didn't obey his teacher. You ask why and he tells you because she was mean to me. You respond, "That's ok honey you did the right thing. I'll give that mean teacher a call and set her straight." You do that and you're hindering the kingdom of God in his life.

Yes, there are times to call a teacher, but we must do it with respect. But far too often, we disrespect and dishonor authorities because: they didn't ask exactly right, or we don't like them, we don't agree with their decision, they weren't nice to me, they're not a Christian, we can't receive from someone like them.

There are all nothing but excuses. The Bible is full of people who honored evil or harsh authorities. David honored Saul even when he was trying to kill him. Jesus honored the authorities who eventually did kill him.

The way authorities treat us should not give us an excuse not to honor them. If we want to know how we honor God, we can look at how we honor authorities. This is especially true in the family. Ephesians 6:1-3 says:

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. "Honor your father and mother" - which is the first commandment with a promise - "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

Many young people set off to pursue dreams only to run into destruction and the simple reason is they don't honor their parents. The Bible teaches if you want to live a long and prosperous life, you must honor your parents. This is not just for little children. All of us – no matter how old – need to honor our parents. Don't think you can dishonor your parents and be blessed by God.

No parents are perfect – and some parents' behavior may not deserve respect – they may not be honorable - but if you want God's power in your life – choose to honor your parents anyway. If you can't say anything good about them, at least don't say anything bad about them!

It's the same for husbands and wives. Ephesians 5:33 says:

...let the wife see that she respects and reverences her husband (that she notices him, regards him, honors him).

1 Peter 3:7 says:

Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

If families do not show each other honor, our prayers will be hindered. Once again, we see – lack of honor will hinder God's power.

2. A Proverbs 31 Family Has a Culture of Kindness

Proverbs 31:26 says ***She opens her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the law of kindness.***

1 Corinthians 13:4-5 says that ***Love is kind... Love is not rude.***

Rudeness means discourteous, disrespectful, and unmannerly. Rudeness ranges from being inconsiderate of others to outright in your face rage. Love is more than not being rude – more than saying well at least I wasn't unkind. No – love goes farther than not being rude - *Love is kind.*

Kindness literally means to be nice, to meet needs - to treat others with courtesy and politeness. By the way - whatever happened to common courtesy? Even in our families – we are usually kinder and more courteous to an absolute stranger than we are to those we love the most!

We say things to our own families we would never say to strangers. To have a culture of kindness we need to work on courtesy: Say please and thank you. Don't interrupt others.

If we absolutely love someone, we will be kind to them, we will desire to do what's best for them; and we will be "courteous." You might think - well these people know I love them so I can treat them unkindly. No way! You can't love people without kindness because love is kind! Jesus said in Luke 6:35-36

But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because He is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

To be a Proverbs 31 Family, we must be kind to each other.

3. A Proverbs 31 Family Has a Culture of Blessing

Proverbs 31:28 says ***Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.***

Our society today is filled with children who rise up against their parents! But they do not rise up and bless their parents – instead, they rise up and curse them.

They don't rise up in respect; they rise up in rebellion. But a Proverbs 31 child will rise up and bless their parents. They will praise them in public and in private. They have a culture of blessing.

In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for blessed is “barak” which means to praise, to honor, to cause to prosper. In the New Testament, the Greek word is “eulegeo.” We get our word eulogy from that. A eulogy is the words spoken at a funeral about the deceased. It means to speak well of someone, to praise them.

Putting these two words together, we see that blessing is the impartation of the power of God by the spoken word that causes someone to prosper. If we knew the power of blessing, we would spend the rest of our lives blessing as many people as possible.

There are many ways we can bless others, but there are 5 elements to a biblical blessing:

1. Meaningful touch – such as the laying on of hands
2. A spoken message
3. Attaching high value to the one being blessed
4. Picturing a prophetic future for the one being blessed
5. Active commitment to seeing the blessing fulfilled

People in the Bible understood the power of blessing. In Gen. 27, Jacob and Esau fought over receiving their father's blessing. When Esau realized he had lost out on his blessing, ***he burst out with a loud and bitter cry and said to his father, "Bless me too, my father!"***

This shows the power of blessing. It is so powerful that one son did anything possible to get it. The other one cried aloud, “Bless me too!” So, he received a lesser, partial blessing.

And many homes today only give a partial blessing! In some homes, the blessing is performance oriented. If you are good, I'll bless you. Otherwise, I'll curse you. Or the blessing may be always out of reach. If you got C's on your report card, why not B's? If you get B's, why not A's? The bar keeps getting raised.

When people do not receive blessing from their families, they spend the rest of their lives looking for it. You may be looking for it and not know it. Don't live another day without the blessing of the Lord upon your family. Release the power of God into their lives with spoken blessings. Lay your hands on them and speak life, health confidence, success, faith, love, joy, and peace over them. Shape their lives through the power of the blessing!

Bless the Lord as a family and then bless others around you.
 In fact, the Bible even says to bless your enemies – to bless those who curse you.
 You reap what you sow. Begin to sow seeds of blessing and you will be blessed.
 It's a promise. Don't miss out on the supernatural power of blessing.

I want to close by reminding you that our first priority must be to bless God.
 You'll never be able to bless others if you don't start blessing God! How do we
 bless God? By praising Him and speaking well of Him!

Some of us are watching and waiting for blessing, and God is watching and
 waiting for us to bless Him. Some of you are one blessing away from a blessing!

What I mean by that is this: if you turn loose of your moping and complaining
 and choose to bless God in the midst of your trial – choose to offer up a sacrifice
 of praise – choosing to bless God releases the power of God to bless you!

We usually reverse this order – I'll be thankful if and when God provides.
 God – give me something to be thankful for. But how can I be thankful when my
 bills are overdue or my job hunt seems fruitless or something I'm believing for
 still hasn't happened?

Let me ask you this: what if God is waiting for you to be thankful for what you
 have before He multiplies what you have?

Most of the time, blessing FROM God comes after we give blessing TO God!
 So, can anyone join me in blessing God today?

As the Psalmist said:

Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!