

Family Worship Guide – Week 20

READ

Read Proverbs 31:10-31.

The book of Proverbs concludes with a poem extolling the attributes of the “excellent wife” (vv. 10, 29), whose worth to her husband surpasses that of great material wealth. The Proverbs 31 woman displays many virtues that remain relevant for women aspiring to be godly wives today. This passage is a poem, therefore, not every verse is to be understood literally. Instead, the writer often uses poetic imagery to teach a general principle. This is extremely important when it comes to the application of this passage. After reading and studying this passage the end goal is not for every Christian wife in the 21st century to mimic each and every activity of the “excellent wife” found in this chapter. Verse 15 is a perfect example. When it says “She rises while it is yet night”, this does not mean that a wife must get up out of bed each morning before the sun comes up. Instead, the general principle being taught in this verse is that the excellent wife is not to be lazy but is to work hard in taking good care of her family. Many other general principles are taught in this passage concerning the praiseworthy virtues of an “excellent wife.” The Proverbs 31 woman:

- is extremely valuable and hard to find (v. 10);
- is a trusted companion (v. 11);
- is concerned for her husband’s well-being (v. 12);
- is industrious and hardworking (vv. 13, 27);
- goes out of her way to secure and prepare food for her family (vv. 14, 15);
- is not lazy but works hard to take good care of her family (v. 15);
- is wise with her financial responsibilities (v. 16);
- is active and energetic (vv. 17, 25);
- is diligent and very skilled in her work (vv. 18-19);
- is kind to the poor, reaches out in mercy to the needy (v. 20);
- ensures that she and her children are properly and finely dressed (vv. 21-22);
- is prepared for the future and whatever circumstances may come (vv. 21, 25);
- is married to a respected man (v. 23);
- possesses great entrepreneurial skill (v. 24);
- displays wisdom in her speech, and kindness in her teaching (v. 26);
- oversees and cares for her household (v. 27);
- is praised by her children and husband (vv. 28-29, 31);
- is God-fearing rather than relying on her physical beauty (vv. 28-29, 31).

Questions:

Why is an “excellent wife” as described in Proverbs 31 so difficult to find?

Verse 30 says “a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” What does it mean to fear the Lord? What does this look like?

Verse 28 says the children of the excellent wife rise up and call her blessed and her husband praises her. As a family, spend some time now praising God for your mother and/or wife. Share with her a specific way you see God at work in her life.

Bottom Line: A woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.

PRAY

In 1966 Henry and Dorothy Davis moved their young family to Quito, Ecuador, to oversee churches in the mountain region of the country. One day after finding two boys living in a crawl space underneath the foundation of a church, the Lord opened this couple's eyes to the needs of many orphans in their community. Almost fifty years later their ministry has grown and flourished with over 1,000 children raised in gospel-centered homes and educated to contribute in the work place. The Church at Brook Hills now has two families going to plant their lives and continue the legacy of discipleship and orphan care in the Houses of Happiness community. Bob and Ann Coe, along with their children, will join Chris and Vickie Nichols and their children in Ecuador this summer to spend their lives for the sake of the gospel. The Coes have been a vital part of The Church at Brook Hills for more than a decade. Ann works on staff with the communications team, and their family has been an important part of making disciples in our faith family. Ann will work as a music teacher at a local International School in the area, and Bob will help in the development and management of

the orphanage and surrounding community.

Chris and Vickie Nichols are also a vital part of the faith family at Brook Hills. Chris has served as the Executive Pastor at Brook Hills for the past few years. He and Vickie both have positions at a local International School in Quito to serve the families and students of that community. The Nichols have a unique position when it comes to orphan care as their family includes adopted children from the Ukraine. Currently there are 110 children living at the orphanage in Quito; most are between the ages of 12-18. Many of the children are sent to Houses of Happiness after pastors of local churches discover them in the community. Ecuador is home to over 13 million people with 1.8 million living in the capital of Quito. Although there has been encouraging economic growth, poverty is still rife and economic disparity massive. Many times the greatest victims of poverty are orphans who have no one to care and provide for them. Please pray for the Coe and Nichols Families as they plant their lives for the sake of the gospel and care for orphans in Ecuador.

SING

The song for this week is 'Lord Always' by Josh Poore and David Leonard. As you worship together as a family, rejoice in the fact that we serve a Risen Savior who will reign forever. He is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow. 'Lord Always' is an exclamation of His grace, His love, and ultimately His glory. The second half of the chorus says, "Now our purpose, we live to make You famous, 'til every tongue sings praises declaring You are Lord always." As Christ-followers we have the privilege of making His name famous, and declaring that He is Lord Always.

MEMORIZE

Proverbs 31:10 An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.

SUGGESTIONS

These suggestions were created by the age-group ministry leaders as a way to help parents better communicate the biblical truths discussed in the Family Worship Guide. These suggestions are intended to help parents facilitate God-centered discussions with their children. Parents should prayerfully use these suggestions, and any other means necessary, to help their children discover the truths of God's word and worship Him together.

All Ages

- Re-read Proverbs 31: 28- 30.
- Scripture teaches "a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised" (v. 30). Lead your children to think through the list above of the attributes of an "excellent" wife and take note of any of these attributes your family sees present in mom.
- Ultimately, we understand that any good produced in us is the result of the grace of God at work in our lives (Phil. 2:13). This means we can give praise to God for the excellent things we see in mom's life. Thank God together as a family for these things.
- Explain to your children you want the ways in which you bless mom to extend even beyond praying for her and thanking God for her. Ask mom what household chore or activity she would be most blessed by if it were to be done for her. Then, invite mom to relax in whatever way she chooses while the rest of the family carries out that assignment or chore.
- Optional additional questions for students:
 - Based on Proverbs 31, where does a woman find the strength to live out this calling?
 - What are some of the most important qualities a "Proverbs 31" woman is called to reflect?
 - As a family, discuss what kinds of things this woman would be doing in the 21st century. What things would be important to her?

Lives/Church

The Bible lays out a clear pattern for biblical manhood and womanhood. While the Scriptures do not intend to force us into a cookie-cutter mold, they do set forth some principles that are essential to the way God made us (Gen. 1-3). We live in a culture that, by and large, does not celebrate the Bible's teaching on femininity. Since Genesis 3, the serpent has been trying to reverse the order of male headship and female submission. The biblical virtues like modesty, submission, and a gentle and quiet spirit (Eph. 5:22; 1 Tim. 2:9-15; 1 Pet. 3:1-6) are seen as oppressive and antiquated in our day. Pray that our families and our faith family would honor the biblical teaching of what it means to be a woman, even if that means being radically countercultural. Pray that we would teach our daughters to aspire to be biblical women and our sons to honor and respect women.

Local

Local Church: First Baptist Church Trussville, Buddy Champion

Focus: Family Connection, Inc. - a non-profit outreach for at-risk teens that includes a group home, emergency shelter, a school counseling program, a weekend intervention program for youth and their families, and street outreach services for runaway and homeless youth.

Monday: Pray that God would equip the staff and volunteers of Family Connection with great wisdom and skill as they seek to work with at-risk, homeless, and runaway youth in our area.

Tuesday: Pray that students and parents who are in conflict would ultimately see Christ as their hope for their family and individual lives.

Wednesday: Pray for the many teens living on the streets of Birmingham, that they would be receptive to the outreach of groups like Family Connection that can help them.

Thursday: Pray for those from our faith family who work at Family Connection or volunteer their time to work with students and their families. Pray they would represent Christ in their words and deeds.

Friday: Pray that God would send many more Christian men and women to volunteer as mentors, leaders, and helpers to come alongside the leadership of Family Connection.

Saturday: Pray that God would reconcile broken and wounded families in our area through the leadership of Family Connection.

Scripture Memory

An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels. Proverbs 31:10

Global

Short Term Teams: India, Southeast Asia and East Asia

Partner: This week we are praying for the Coe and Nichols Families, long-term missionaries to Ecuador.

Monday: Pray for the children living at the Houses of Happiness orphanage to know Christ.

Tuesday: Pray for God's grace for the nine Nichols children in school both in the USA and in Ecuador.

Wednesday: Pray for endurance as both families learn the local language in Ecuador.

Thursday: Pray for peace as the Coe family transitions to a new culture and as their children begin classes at a new school.

Friday: Pray for unity of mind, heart and mission among their team and for God to give wisdom and faith as they expand the new ministry.

Saturday: Pray for the gospel to advance in Quito and into every nation.

Verse 2:

F#m A B

Now we remember when we
F#m A B

Were made alive in Christ our King

F#m A B

And to the hopeless venture
F#m A B

To tell about the hope You bring.

D A E

How could a greater love be true?

Be true?

D A E

We'll say the greatest love is in You

It's in You!

Repeat Chorus

D A F#m E D A F#m E
(repeat)

Bridge: (3x)

D A

It's by grace we've been saved
F#m E

We've been saved.

D A

It's by grace we've been saved
F#m E

We've been saved.

Repeat Chorus

Tag:

F#m A B

You are Lord always

F#m A B F#m A B

Lord Always

by Josh Poore & David Leonard

F#m A B F#m A B

(repeat)

Verse 1:

F#m A B

You set the world in motion

F#m A B

Created ev'rything I see.

F#m A B

Yet chose to die for sinners

F#m A B

You gave Your life to rescue me

D A E

How could a greater love be true?

Be true?

D A E

I've found the greatest love is in You

It's in You!

Chorus:

A

Jesus, Light of the world

F#m

You saved us. Conquered the grave

D

And raised us, and we will reign with

F#m A B

You always.

A

Now this our purpose:

F#m

We live to make You famous,

D

'til every tongue sings praises

F#m A B

declaring You are Lord always.

F#m A B F#m A B

