

Gospel Living for Younger Women

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[0 : 00] And we're in Proverbs 31, verses 10 through 31 in our scripture reading.! Proverbs 31, I'll read from verse 10 to the end of the chapter.

A wife of noble character, who can find? She's worth far more than rubies. Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.

She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. She's like the merchant's ships, bringing her food from afar.

She gets up while it is still dark. She provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. She considers a field and buys it.

Out of her earnings, she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously. Her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.

[1 : 08] In her hands, she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. When it snows, she has no fear for her household, for all of them are clothed in scarlet.

She makes coverings for her bed. She is clothed in fine linen and purple. Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.

She makes linen garments and sells them and supplies the merchants with sashes. She is clothed with strength and dignity. She can laugh at the days to come.

She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

Her children arise and call her blessed. Her husband also, and he praises her. Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.

[2 : 13] Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting. But a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

Amen. Pastor Jason. Well, young men, those are the kind of women you should be looking for when you're looking for a spouse. We are in Titus chapter 2, and we've talked about older men and older women, and tonight we're going to talk about younger women.

We're going to get to younger men and slaves someday later. You remember what the false teachers were doing. It's been a while, but chapter 1, verse 11 says they must be silenced.

And then he gives a reason, because they are ruining whole households. Ruining whole households. How are they doing that? They're doing it by teaching things that they ought not to teach.

So imagine somebody came along to your house, and they broke in. They broke into your foundation. They pulled out a few blocks of the foundation, and that guy crawls into your crawl space and takes a sledgehammer and just beats that main central sewer pipe that goes out of your house and connects to the sewer, and he breaks that off.

[3 : 41] And so the family's flushing toilets and doing dishes, and instead of getting into the sewer system, it's just going straight into your crawl space.

Or here comes another teacher, and he climbs up on the roof, and he takes a few shingles off, and he tears a hole in that roof. And next time it rains, that rain drips, drips straight into your attic, straight onto the insulation, ruining the insulation.

And pretty soon, it's all over the ceilings. And where there's rain and water, there's mold. And so now there's this mold spreading throughout your house, covering your studs, covering your drywall.

In other words, the house is ruined. It's ruined. Well, that's what false teachers do. That's what they do to families. They ruin roofs.

They ruin plumbing. They ruin foundations. They destroy relationships. They ruin households. But now in chapter 2, the Apostle Paul is giving a picture, at least in part, of what does the gospel do then to those same relationships?

[4 : 58] False teachers ruin them. And the gospel, well, this is how houses and homes flourish. Here's how a house becomes a haven, a place that people want to come to, that's inviting, that's full of fresh air.

And so love is the roof over your head. And kindness is the fresh air that you're breathing. At our house, we have an essential oil diffuser.

And you can put different sort of blends in there. And one of my favorites comes from Walgreens. And it has the nice title called Happiness. And for \$5 of this essential oil, I can put that in.

And happiness fills my house. Well, not exactly. But it smells nice. It does smell nice. It is nice. But the gospel is the real oil gladness.

The gospel is the real happiness diffuser. And so do you want that kind of blessing? Not a house ruined, but a house flourishing, a family flourishing, attractive and inviting.

[6 : 09] Well, chapter 2 is going to help you with that. And so now we're on to young women. And I have three points of introduction. And then we're going to get down to the main business of the text, the main part of the lesson.

And so just three very brief points of introduction. The first is, older ladies, here is your curriculum. Here's your syllabus.

Here's your agenda. Here's the outline for your class. So if you're older, you can't say, I'm past this. I don't need this section. That other section was my section.

Now this section is their section. No, because these are the things that you are commanded to teach. These are the things that you're commanded to teach to the younger ladies. And, well, if you're called to teach something, you're going to want to know your material.

So tonight's just an overview of these things. And older ladies, you really do need to dig in and think through this more thoroughly. Because this is what Jesus wants you to teach to those younger ladies.

[7 : 12] To your daughters, to your younger sisters in Christ here at the church. So, even though we're directly talking to younger ladies, older ladies, this is for you.

Second point of introduction, and a special word to the ladies, especially to the younger ladies. Remember the gospel.

As we go through this list, you need to remember the gospel. None of this is simple law. None of this is just simple demand, demand, demand. And God is saying, build bricks and I'm not giving you any straw.

This is all, all this whole list of young men, old men, older ladies, younger ladies. It's all in the context of God's saving grace. We're going to get more to it at the end of the chapter.

But just jump ahead if you're in Titus chapter 2. That's where you should be. Sorry, Titus chapter 2. Verse 11. Verse 11. The grace of God that brings salvation has appeared.

[8 : 15] So, grace has come. Verse 12. Grace teaches. Verse 13. You have hope. You have a savior. Verse 14. Jesus gave himself for you. This is the context in which these commands are given to you.

It's not simply a demand without any help. Now, all of this would really be impossible. All of this loving your husband, loving your children, being self-controlled, being subjected to your husbands.

That's hard. And it's impossible. It's impossible without grace. But that's not you. That's what I want you to hold on to as we get into this.

That's not you, Christian sister. You're a new creation. You haven't been given a spirit of fear, but of power and love and self-control. And so, you have this burning, blowing, loving, creating, comforting, sustaining spirit of God the Father and God the Son in you.

You are not an old creation anymore. You are a new creation. And so, these things come to you as expectations, as this is what you need to do, but it comes to you as a new creation, a daughter of God, filled with the Holy Spirit, loved by Jesus Christ.

[9 : 36] And so, none of this is apart from your Father's love, the Savior's grace. You have Jesus Christ, and he's come to you. And he does come to you clothed with the gospel, clothed with good news and with love as a friend.

And so, that needs to be said. When you have this list and you say, oh, I can't do this, or you lose heart, or you feel nothing but guilt in all the ways that you're failing, I want to encourage you, turn your eyes on Jesus and look full into his wonderful face, and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and his grace.

Some of the things that should grow strangely dim is, this is impossible for me. It's just me. No, you have him. You have him. And so, there's grace for whatever God gives you to do.

There's grace. That doesn't just mean help. It means forgiveness. It means understanding. It means mercy. It means kindness. He gently leads those that have young.

And so, he doesn't expect the mama sheep with young to keep up with him. No, he gently leads her along. He goes at her pace. So, that's the second point of introduction.

[10 : 56] I hope you keep that in mind. The third point of introduction is this. And this is a little bit off subject, but I think it needs to be said. And that is this, that some women are single.

They're single. Paul's going to talk to younger women. And he's going to talk like they are all married. Or he's going to assume that they are. They're going to be married and they have children.

And most are. And most are. That's just statistically true. That's just generally true. But I want to say that while that is usually the case, that is not always the case.

Because God calls some young ladies to be single. Maybe single their whole life. Maybe for extensive periods of their lives. For years upon years.

And so, some women, God calls to singleness. 1 Corinthians 7. It's seen as a gift. It's seen as a special opportunity to serve the Lord.

[11 : 56] And so, it is his gift. It is his calling. And I know I've said this lately. And I want to say it again. And I kind of want to say it. And just to, maybe in defense of single ladies or single men.

In some ways, Paul says, it's to be preferred. Third, single people, single Christians that aren't married, that don't have children, are not second level Christians. They're not waiting for their chance.

They're not waiting for their turn to serve. Or their turn to be Christian women. These young ladies that are single, they are Christian women. They aren't waiting to serve. They are serving.

And so, their service, their devotion should not be looked down upon. You cannot judge a person's maturity based on singleness or marriage. They might not be immature at all.

They could be very mature, more mature than a woman with ten kids. You know Nancy Lee DeMoss. Most of you ladies know her.

[13 : 00] I want to ask you a question. If you know her, where was she 35 years ago? So, 35 years ago, she was 25, 26. And where was she?

Mark Akins isn't here, but he would know where she was because they were both attending the small same college in Pennsylvania together at the same time. And so, where was she 35 years ago?

Well, she was just out of college. She had no big ministry. She had no books. She had no radio programs. She had no conferences. She had no husband.

And I don't know really how she felt about all of that. But however she felt, she chose to serve. She chose to love. She chose to be in the church.

And I don't know if her desire for a husband, how strong that was. I don't know anything like that. But I do know that her desire for a husband didn't make her bitter and useless.

[14 : 05] She served. She was single. She was godly. She was useful. She was a gift to the church. And what I'm saying is that is a real category that ladies can belong in, young men can belong in.

And everything that happened afterwards to her, all the books and the ministry and the conference and all that wonderful service that she did, it just didn't poof into existence one day. It was built on years and years of dedication and service as a single young lady.

So those are the three things I kind of want to get as an introduction. And so enough introduction. What is a life that harmonizes, that matches the gospel if you're a younger woman?

And a younger woman in this, and really in Paul's words, is anyone of childbearing years or still in that? Timothy, in his letter to 1 Timothy, he talks about anyone under 60.

And so this younger ladies could be a very broad category. So what is a life that harmonizes with the gospel for younger ladies?

[15 : 17] Please. The first is be husband lovers. Be husband lovers. In the Greek, it's just one word. And I really like that it's just one word.

So who is that lady over there? Well, what is she? She's a husband lover. She loves her husband. That's what defines her. That's who she is.

She's his lover. His biggest fan. She takes care of him. That's his best friend. You want to know all about her? She's devoted to him.

Ever since they stood at that altar and they said, I do to each other, she's been all his. She's changed over the years. He's changed over the years. And yet all through it, she's been the one that loves him.

She's a lot different than what she used to be. So for me, 36-year-old Stephanie is different than 19-year-old Stephanie. In some ways, they're very different ladies.

[16 : 19] But the thing that ties all the different ladies, all the different stuff together is that promise of I'm going to love him. And that's what it is for you. You've changed.

He's changed. And yet that promise of I'm going to be the one that loves him. I'm going to be the one that stays with him. And that's what's brought the unity in this marriage.

I'll love him. I'll be the one that loves him. Ephesians 5 says, Husbands, love your wives like Christ loves the church. And how did he love the church? He laid down his life for her.

His life flowed out so that she could have life. He became poor and it had a direct correlation to how rich she became. He became poor so that she might become rich.

He died that she might live. Wives, that's what a husband lover does. She gives her life for him.

[17 : 18] And he for her. And she for him. It goes both ways. Do you see how the gospel works itself out in marriage?

If Jesus laid down his life for me, an undeserving sinner, then I should also lay my life down for him, an undeserving sinner.

Husbands, the problem happens when we think we are deserving. And we're not. Her standing at the altar and saying, I do to you, was a profound act of grace on her part.

And we haven't earned her love. And so saying, I do to me, was grace. And so, men, we need to get over ourselves. If that woman would lay down her life for you, then you should humbly receive that as a gift of grace.

Not your due. But you see how it works. The gospel teaches us to love graciously. And it also teaches us to receive love graciously.

[18 : 26] And that's how the gospel makes beautiful marriages. And that is really what Paul is really keen on in this whole passage.

There are people looking on the outside. And they're judging the gospel by the way we act. They're going to malign the gospel. They're going to look down on it.

They're going to despise it. And so, our duty is to make it look attractive. And the way we do that is through a beautiful marriage, a gracious marriage.

So, one, be husband lovers. Next, it's another one-word thing in the Greek. It's children lovers. Your children love them. And we want to say, don't all women love their children?

And the answer is, no. They don't. They should. But Christian women are called to love their children.

[19 : 27] Again, you cannot escape. You cannot escape, ladies, the reality of the sacrifice that that's going to demand of you.

It's going to mean perseverance and pain. I think I was reading Mark Chansky's book about womanly dominion. And his mother-in-law, upon the birth of their first child, said, you're holding the narrow end of the stick.

It's going to get a lot bigger and badder as it goes along. It's easier at the beginning. There's some difficult things. No doubt about that. But that motherly love that's going to lay down her life at the beginning of those sleepless nights.

And then keep going and keep going and putting her needs and her desires and the things that she wants to do under the concerns of the children. And so it's going to mean perseverance. It's going to mean fierceness and gentleness.

And all of it wrapped up so perfectly. And so moms, love those children. And love them fiercely. Love them fiercely.

[20 : 38] Sometimes it means a fight, doesn't it? And not a fight where you're criticizing and ridiculing, but you're fighting for their hearts. We see that in Proverbs.

Isn't the man, the father in the Proverbs, constantly he's fighting for the love of his children. And he's doing it by pouring out his own heart before them. And so moms, that's what you're called to. Not criticizing.

Not that there's not a place for that. But you're fighting for them with love. And sometimes they need to know that mom really loves me. And so you want to tie them up with cords of love.

Your kids should not doubt your love for them. They should go out the door to their first day of kindergarten or the first day of school or their first job or off to college or down the aisle with the understanding, locked in their minds that mom loves me.

You know, my friends, they say they love me. The people out there say they love me. And maybe they do. And maybe they don't. But there's no doubt about my mom. My mom loves me.

[21 : 44] She loved me with kindness. And she loved me with anger. And she loved me with gentleness. And she loved me with patience. And she loved me when it was good. And she loved me when it was bad.

And she's my biggest cheerleader, my biggest fan. And that's what your kids should know. How do I know? Well, she told me.

She showed me. She was the midnight counselor. She was the taxi cab driver. And it means starting well and it means ending well.

So starting when they're babies and going all the way through. I'm not there personally. But I know that when they leave the home, being a mom and being a dad doesn't stop.

So it means starting well, ending well. It means living with a messy house and a disorganized schedule. I'm really appreciating that proverb where there's no oxen, the barn is clean.

[22 : 42] You know? Where there's nothing productive going on, well, the barn is clean. But where there's an active, productive farm, there's going to be dirty barns.

There's going to be disorganization. And so moms loving those kids and serving them and getting things done, being productive, it's going to mean a mess sometimes. You're going to have time to have a perfectly clean house maybe later.

But you're not going to have a 10-year-old or 11-year-old or a 6-year-old to love for the rest of your life. So love them well now. So husband lovers, children lovers, both just one word.

Next is self-controlled. It's just another one word. It means discreet. It means sober. It means thoughtful. It means clear-headed. It means considerate. And that's what it looks like, younger ladies.

You've got a good head on your shoulders. The gospel does not make us dumber and more naive. It makes us more clear-headed and clear-eyed and sober about life.

[23 : 48] And I don't want to say too much here, but just to say this, you know, there's enough dumb, bird-brained, careless mothers and wives out there.

They don't know what they're doing. They don't know why they're doing it. They don't know where they're going. They're just, in the words of Proverbs, they're fools. They're those ostriches.

In Job 38. Listen to the description of these ladies. Job 39. She lays her eggs on the ground and lets the sun warm them in the sand.

You have the idea. She just lays her eggs there and she's not going to sit on them. Someone else, something else will take care of it. Unmindful that a foot may crush them. She treats her young harshly as if they were not hers.

She cares not that her labor was in vain. For God did not endow her with wisdom or give her a share of good sense. Don't be like that.

[25 : 01] That's my main point here. Proverbs 31. We saw that her husband has full confidence in her. That means a lot of things.

But I know, you know, some husbands who don't have full confidence in their wives. They can't trust their wives with things. And they shouldn't. They haven't proven themselves. They're foolish and loud and indiscreet.

Women. And so ladies, don't be like that. Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 31. This wife of noble character. She is wonderfully wise and discreet. Words of wisdom are on her mouth.

She's considering fields. She's buying them. She's thoughtful. She's thinking about her family and the needs and the future. She's careful. She does good to her husband and children all the days of her life.

She's no ostrich. She's no bird brain talker who doesn't know the way home. Charm is deceptive.

[26 : 00] Beauty is fleeting. But a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised. Read Proverbs 31. She's interesting and attractive, wonderful, intelligent woman.

And she is to be praised. In other words, she's what this is talking about here. She's self-controlled. She's sober-minded.

She's not lazy. She's strong and she does a job and she does it well. Next is pure. It means chaste.

Guarding your eyes. Guarding your heart. Keeping romantic, sexual love in the fireplace of marriage.

So, young women, listen to another young woman. Tell her story.

[27 : 06] And I hope you'll learn from it. It's a true story. It was Easter Sunday, 1999. And I was a mess.

As I crawled out of bed, my feet touched the cold wood floor. And I knew the next time I crawled back in, my life would not be the same. I gazed in the mirror, seeing a person I didn't really know.

A person I never thought I'd be. How had life spiraled so out of control? A zillion tiny decisions, one after another, had led me here.

Like a path that subtly veers off the road. Eventually leading to a place far, far away. And that's where I had traveled. At 21, she had married her husband.

Tried to figure out what being married was about. She had a baby. And in the spring of 1996, this is what she said, my battle started. A battle within my mind.

[28 : 10] A battle I would eventually lose. She liked to sing. And so she sang at a Christmas pageant. She was Mary. He was Joseph.

And she began crushing on him. Thinking about him. What should I wear for him? And it was exciting. And it was exhilarating.

So this whole new little fantasy world grew up inside of her. Of her mind. Inside of her. And she liked to go there. It was fun. It was easy. It wasn't marriage.

It wasn't children. It was something different. And so talking. Being friends. Emotional attachment. He was in her heart.

And in her head. And she was in his heart. And had before they were in each other's beds. But soon it was that. And on and on it went. Until they were sick of it. Until their sin was a poison.

- [29 : 04] Choking them. And they just knew. They had to do something about it. But. So it was Easter. After church. After lunch. Her son leaves with grandpa and grandma.
- And now it's time. The double life has to end. Two congregations would be devastated. Two men would probably lose their jobs. Two spouses would be crushed.
- But that double life had to end. I never intended to hurt anyone. But my actions screamed otherwise.
- And the awkward formality of my seriousness. Caught us both off guard. I need to talk to you. I had no idea. What would happen after the words were out.
- My heart pounded. And he saw the dread in my eyes. There's something I need to tell you. And glancing down at my knees. I breathed deep. And began one excruciating word at a time.
- [30 : 05] You need to know. I've been having an affair. For the past two and a half years. Silence. The next few hours were a blur. So few words.
- Such. Great. Pain. Devastating. Life altering. Pain. Young women.
- Don't think that can't happen. To you. Purity starts with guarding your heart. Your mind. Purity starts with devoting yourself only to your husband.
- Purity is not anti-sexuality. It's not prudishness. Purity in the Bible is passionate. And frequent. And enjoyable. Romantic.
- Sexual relations. With your husband. And you can read Song of Songs. The lady in that poem. She speaks first. She speaks the most.
- [31 : 02] She is bold. She is forward. She's almost like Eve. Right out of God's hand again. She's naked and unashamed. She's the one with the audience. And she's the teacher saying to the young lady students.
- Don't awaken love until it's time. Not because it's bad. But because it is so powerful. It is too much to handle. Outside of a committed married relationship. And so the gospel doesn't ruin that.
- It doesn't ruin sexuality. It saves it. It recovers it. It protects it. It guards it. And that's what Christian purity is. And that's what he's talking about.
- Young ladies. So love your husbands. Love your children. Be sober minded. Be self-controlled. And be pure. There's three more things that we want to say.
- But I don't want to just slam them all in here. Don't have time for that. But I think younger ladies and older ladies.
- [32 : 01] That's enough to get going on. To start thinking about. To start working on. And I just want to leave you where I started you. You need help for all of this.
- And there is grace for you. There is grace. There's God's kindness. So look to your heavenly father. Look to your wonderful savior. Look to Jesus Christ. He is full of grace and truth for you.
- And when you come to him. He has everything that you need. You have a Holy Spirit. Who brings all that Jesus is. And he makes him yours. And so do you need forgiveness?
- Do you need a fresh start? Do you need new hope? Do you need good ideas? Do you need to know how to implement these things? Do you need grace for all of this?
- Well there is grace deeper. Than all your sin. And all of your shame. And all of your confusion. And all of your fears. Jesus is enough.
- [32 : 59] Jesus gives fresh starts. And so I don't want you to go out of here weighted down. Thinking oh this is a lot to do. And I can't do this. But I do want you to leave here excited and hopeful.

You are a blessed daughter of God. You have what you need. And this is. And he says this is how you live the gospel out. This is how you live a life that reflects that gospel.

Well let's pray. Oh Lord there is a lot here. There is a lot here to do.

A lot here. That you call the younger ladies too. And so I pray that you would give them help. And grace. Forgiveness. And mercy. And strength. And wisdom. And all that they need.

Thank you that you give us the right way. And in walking in your commands. There is great delight. There is such wonderful encouragement. There is peace. And there is joy.

[33 : 59] And so I pray that you would strengthen their arms and their legs. And give them grace that they might walk in this path. Help us as husbands to be.

To not make it any more difficult than it needs to be. But to love them as well. Thank you for this good word. Thank you for the help that you've promised us.

Thank you that you are with us. Every day. That you're going to be with us this evening. In our marriages. And for our young ladies who are single.

Thank you that there is. You haven't left them on the sideline. You haven't treated them as second class in any way. So please bless them as well.

Pray all these things in Jesus name. Amen.