



The Proverbs 1-30 Man

Brownsburg Church of Christ

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AM Assembly



Introduction:

When I have preached on being a man in the past, I have often joked that God provided a picture of a virtuous wife by giving us the “Proverbs 31 Woman,” it would have been helpful if He had also given us a description of an excellent husband by providing a “Proverbs 32 Man.” I have realized, however, why there is no such description; because that is what God already provided in **Proverbs 1-30**. I am sure I could preach a year-long series on manhood from these chapters. However, in this lesson, we will focus on four major areas of advice and hopefully we will be better men for it.

As we examine **Proverbs**, there are three ways in which this advice should be viewed. First, for men, this is what you must be like. Second, for unmarried women, if you desire a happy marriage, you should look for this kind of man. Third, for parents, use the proverbialist’s advice to train up your sons.

Discussion:

I. The virtuous husband and his God.

- A. We know that the husband is the head of the family (**Ephesians 5:23; 6:1-4**). He is the one in authority in the family. He sets the tone, casts the vision, establishes the goals, and leads the way. Regrettably, though, too many men think that as the head they are a law unto themselves. You must understand, you are not the ultimate head of your family—God is (**I Corinthians 11:3**). As such, you must first get your relationship with God in line.
- B. **Proverbs 1:7** claims you should fear the Lord. That fear is the beginning of wisdom. If you develop a healthy fear of God, everything else we discuss in this lesson will follow naturally. The problem is most men do not walk in the fear of the Lord. They walk however they feel like walking and then try to justify it.
- C. **Proverbs 3:5** says you are to trust God, which is defined by saying you should not lean on your own understanding. That is, whatever you do in life, whether at home, at work, or in the church, do it based on what God says.
- D. **Proverbs 3:11-12** says you should submit to the Lord’s discipline. While we will not know the extent to which God is behind what happens to us, we must look at what happens in our lives, whether good or bad, and learn from it.
- E. **Proverbs 15:16** says we should be content with having God, no matter what else we have. Because great treasure without God will only bring trouble.
- F. **Proverbs 28:13** demonstrates that you need to be honest about your relationship with God. Do not cover and justify your sins. Rather, be honest about them, confessing them to God and turning from them.
- G. Finally, **Proverbs 3:6** says you should acknowledge God in all your ways. Too many men are focused on having their own glory among their peers and being looked up to by their community. The virtuous husband does not make that his goal. Rather, his goal is to turn others to glorify God, acknowledging His hand in their lives.

II. The virtuous husband and wisdom.

- A. Solomon begins his book by declaring that we should follow after wisdom in **1:20-33**. But very few men follow after wisdom. Most follow after whatever feels right at the moment. Because we do what feels good, instead of what is wise, we mess things up (**Proverbs 14:12; 16:25**). When we have messed up our lives, we want someone to bail us out, but Wisdom says she will not. Therefore, it is incumbent upon us to pursue wisdom before we act. **Proverbs 16:16** says getting wisdom is better than getting gold. How many of us believe that? **Proverbs** has so much to say about wisdom that I cannot put it all in this lesson. However, I will hit some highlights.
- B. Allow truth, mercy and honesty to be your guide. **Proverbs 3:3** claims we should bind mercy and truth around our necks. **Proverbs 11:1** says we need to be honest and just in our dealings with other people. Finally, **Proverbs 23:23** directs us to buy truth and do not sell it. Do not accept the modern philosophy that truth is relative. There are absolutes. Some things are right and some things are wrong. We must be guided by truth. As Jesus said, the truth will free us.

- C. If you are to seek wisdom, you must recognize that you do not have all wisdom. Therefore, you should seek wise counsel from others (**Proverbs 11:14; 13:10; 15:12**). If we do not, we will be filled with strife and be nothing but scoffers and fools. However, do not do as Solomon's son did in **I Kings 12**, going from counselor to counselor until you find someone who supports what you wanted to do anyway. You might as well not even ask anyone for advice. Just do what you were going to do anyway—but then be ready to suffer the consequences as Rehoboam did, losing 10 out of the 12 tribes of Israel from his kingdom.
- D. Going along with the previous point, get rid of pride and arrogance. Consider the following passages: **Proverbs 3:7; 8:13; 11:2; 16:18-19; 26:12**.
- E. Learn to control your tongue. There will be many, otherwise seemingly good men, whose souls will be lost because they refused to keep their mouths shut when they ought to. Consider the following proverbs: **Proverbs 10:18-21; 11:13; 15:4, 23; 17:7, 9, 27-28**.
- F. Learn to control your anger. **Proverbs 14:29** says we should be slow to wrath. Do not be one who explodes quickly or jumps to emotional conclusions and reactions.
- G. **Proverbs 27:1** says we must not boast about tomorrow because we do not know what will happen. Too many men look to the future and think about all that will come when some future event takes place. Do not put your hope in tomorrow; you do not know what it will bring.
- H. Finally, to sum up many other issues of seeking wisdom, recognize that having a good character which develops a good reputation is far better than having lots of money. **Proverbs 22:1** says that a good name is better than riches. Work so that your name brings a positive image to people's minds. Live such that others can say to their friends, "I want to be like ____." Do not sell your character or reputation for lust or money.

III. The virtuous husband and his family.

- A. Just about everything we have discussed is to be taken in the context of living as a husband and a father. An excellent husband and excellent father will have the right relationship with God and will pursue wisdom in his family. However, there are a few points that **Proverbs** makes specifically about how a wise man behaves in his family that should be addressed.
- B. **Proverbs 24:27** says we should prepare our fields before building our house. This passage says your job is to provide for your family. Therefore, before you start thinking about a family, make sure you can support them. Have your fields ready first. Too many men get married because they are "in love" and are not prepared to support a bride. They still have to finish school and find a job. Additionally, once you get married, before you start buying stuff, have your fields prepared to support it. Too many men get involved in amazing debt and have to declare bankruptcy because they had not prepared their fields enough to pay for it.
- C. **Proverbs 5:15-20** demonstrates you should be delighted with your own wife. Do not be delighted with someone else's wife. Too many think the water is sweeter in another well. God says the water is sweetest in your own well. Stay there. Do not wander from home and do not look to other women. Keep in mind that this passage does not teach us to try to make our wives into what is attractive to us. It says we are to be attracted to her.
- D. **Proverbs 22:6** says we should train up our children in the way they should go. Fathers, that is our job. Bring your kids up to maturity. Do not hand that job to the church, the government, the schools, or anyone else. You figure out the way your kids should go, and train them up in that way. This is a key issue of leadership. If you are not determining the way your family goes, then you are not being the leader. An excellent man will make this his job and accomplish it.
- E. **Proverbs 19:13** is an interesting passage. It tells a man that a foolish son will ruin him and a contentious, nagging wife will annoy him. While we may look at this passage as a command for sons and wives, in reality it is for fathers and husbands. Do not raise foolish children, and you will not be ruined. Do not give your wife reason to nag, and you will not be annoyed. I know that one can be a good father and husband and still have a foolish son or a contentious wife. However, before accusing them, we must look to ourselves.

IV. The virtuous husband and his work and money.

- A. **I Timothy 5:8** demonstrates that the husband is the primary provider for the family and if he refuses to fulfill this role, he is worse than an infidel. As we examine the virtuous husband of **Proverbs 1-30**, we see great advice for how a man should handle this responsibility.
- B. **Proverbs 1-30** provides an excellent contrast, rebuking what is man's most common goal for work and what should be his goal. Most men seek riches. Their goal is to accumulate wealth and things. Our work then is governed by greed in far more cases than we are willing to admit. But **Proverbs** rebukes this mindset. **Proverbs 23:4-5** demonstrates the folly of setting riches as your goal in work. When material wealth is

your goal, it will flee from you. Rather, our goal in work is demonstrated by **Proverbs 22:29**. The desire for excellence in all you do should govern your work. When you strive for excellence, then the other benefits of work will accompany you.

- C. Perhaps this next piece of advice for the virtuous husband is implied by striving for excellence; however, it is given so much attention in **Proverbs** that it needs to be highlighted. The virtuous husband is to be a hard worker. There is no room for laziness, whether on his job or in his home. Consider passages such as **Proverbs 19:15, 24; 24:30-34**. Additionally consider the virtuous man's work seen in **Proverbs 6:6; 10:4-5; 12:11, 24; 14:23**. The virtuous husband does not try to get out of work but is constantly industrious.
- D. Because the virtuous husband works hard, striving for excellence in all he does, he will be blessed with some extent of financial prosperity. But the virtuous man does not fritter his resources away on pleasure and entertainment. Rather he first uses his resources wisely to provide for his family's needs and his family's future. In **Proverbs 6:6-8**, the principle of preparation is highlighted. Do not spend the summer playing because winter is coming and you must be prepared. How many virtuous wives struggle to be managers of their homes and prepare their family for the coming snowstorms but are constantly contending with the folly of their husbands? Contending with husbands who, using their mantle as head of the home, spend the family resources on their desires and pleasures. This does not happen with the virtuous husband. He is supportive of his wife as manager and considers his family's future stability above his momentary wants. The virtuous husband only turns to pleasure when his family is prepared. He uses wisdom to guide his use of money.

Conclusion:

When studying the virtuous wife of **Proverbs 31**, we note that her worth was more than jewels, because the virtuous wife is rarer than fine jewels. I have to tell you I think the virtuous **Proverbs 1-30** man is probably even rarer than that. Men, let us heed this advice. Let us become virtuous husbands. Let us get rid of the beams that are in our own eyes before we strive to remove the motes that are in our wives' eyes. I pray that as a congregation we may be a gold mine of virtuous husbands.