

Call to Obedience #311
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In Search of a Standard

Who Can Find A Virtuous Woman?

By Reimar Schultze

“The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him. Who can find a virtuous woman...? For her price is far above rubies.” – Proverbs 31: 1,10

Scholars are not sure who this king Lemuel was. He could have been Solomon whom his mother affectionately called Lemuel, or he could have been a king, or prince, of another nation. Regardless, here we are given the great Biblical picture of what a virtuous woman is to be. The advice ultimately did not really come from Lemuel, but from his mother who, obviously, must have been a virtuous woman herself. Another matter worth pondering is that this poem was set in the order of the Hebrew alphabet, which is to say from A to Z. You can see that virtuous women in those days possibly had their sons and daughters memorize the alphabet by using this poem. They hoped it would get into their hearts during their ‘elementary education’. What would it be like if this poem were required memorization for all of our little ones if not in our secular schools, then at least in our churches? If you, dear woman or young lady, don’t have a picture of a virtuous woman – find it here and become one and start your posterity of virtuous women.

Now then, what is a virtuous woman? A virtuous woman is a woman of strong character and great value and even more than that as we shall soon see. Her life is patterned after God’s design. Oh, how we need to have a standard in our churches for women to aspire to, because women’s roles today are in a chaotic condition. Women are confused as to what is expected of them. So, the question “what is a virtuous woman?” should precede the question “who can find a virtuous woman?” Let’s begin with some startling statistics to see how low womanhood has fallen in America. In 2003, we had 1,415,955 babies born out of wedlock! 34.6% of all births are to unmarried mothers. Every third child that is born is born into an unmarried relationship. We call these births illegitimate because they came about the wrong way. One third of children in our country are born with an incredible disadvantage, being fatherless for all practical purposes. The world says that a woman has the right to have a child without being married. That is called “women’s rights.” The Bible says first marriage then motherhood, anything else is sin excepting that there are cases where a single holy woman may be allowed to raise an unwanted child. Friend, sex outside of marriage is sin. It is selfish; it leads to terrible consequences; it deprives the transgressors of God’s blessing; it is fornication, and no fornicator will inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 6:9, 10). When a woman goes into fornication, she loses her virginity. Virginity is one of the greatest gifts that young couples can give to each other on the day of their wedding. Yes, God can and will forgive sin, if properly repented of, but the damage that has been done will be a heavy load to pull for the rest of the transgressor’s life.

A virtuous woman is pure. Young people, stay away from romance stories. They will entice you into the lust and shame of the world. They destroy your morality and integrity. Don't watch pornographic videos or TV programs, don't possess pornographic magazines, don't watch soap operas, they will excite passion. Those exposed to this filth are most likely to have sex before marriage, and to have extra-marital affairs later in life. When I raised my four children almost two generations ago, I allowed them to watch only two television programs, and then only in my presence. Really, every sincere Christian ought to seriously ask himself whether there is enough virtue coming from the TV set to justify its presence in the home. None of my children were allowed to have radios in their rooms. Now, almost two generations later, I can say affirmatively, that I have no regrets, it all paid off on the blessing side. Parents, young people, do not get your standards from others, get them from God himself and you'll be delivered from a thousand regrets. Oh my friend, why are most young people, even Christian young people, into these things? Is it because many of their parents are into it themselves? Sometimes parents lack character and don't have the strength to watch over their children's activities. Parents, you need to know what your children are doing, and who they are with all the time. There are millions of church-going young people in very conservative homes who secretly watch ungodly programs with friends in other homes. Even Bible carrying, Bible memorizing youth have an incredible propensity to fool their parents. If they don't do that at home, they might do it in college. I just heard a report that in one of the "finest" holiness colleges over 50% of students are into pornography. Parents, do not be fooled into thinking that a christian college is a guarantee that your youth will graduate virtuously. There is no virtue, no character, in a woman who is not pure, holy, and undefiled in all her ways.

A virtuous woman is strong in spirit. She, by her spirit, can rule over her children and greatly influence her husband. Abigail was such a woman. Abigail's wicked husband, Nabal, raised the ire of King David. David took his 400 men and went to kill this evil man. Can you see the fury in David's heart? He took four hundred armed men to kill just one drunkard. But when Abigail heard of it, she took a camel train laden with food and went to meet David. She brought a banquet for his hungry troop of ragged soldiers. She fell in obeisance at David's feet, pled with him to stop the murder. Abigail's gentleness subdued David's spirit of murder.

A virtuous woman waits on God. A virtuous woman is not a tattle tale, but "in her tongue is the law of kindness." A virtuous woman lives to please her husband. "The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life" (Pro. 31: 11, 12). These verses tell us that when a woman is married, her husband becomes her agenda-100%. She was created to help her husband (Gen. 2:18). If a woman does not want to do that, she is rebellious and is refusing to obey God. If she gets married she will bring this rebellion into the home and it will get into her children. I'm talking about Biblical standards for a virtuous woman! Can you see that even 3,000 years ago it was hard to find a virtuous woman? Before girls marry, they need to be virtuous, so they may become virtuous wives and then virtuous mothers who raise virtuous children. And, young man, if you're

not virtuous, no virtuous woman in the world would want to marry you. But for you who are virtuous men and women the Holy Spirit will help you find the life's companion who is for you. Oh, every youth meeting in our churches should be teaching young men and maidens to become virtuous husbands and wives! Is that what is being taught in our youth church services? Youth leader, don't waste your time on anything less than that. Too many youth meetings produce absolutely nothing in terms of character, godliness, and virtue.

A virtuous woman will keep busy. There will be no time for TV shows and telephone gossip. She will be busy helping her husband, her children, and her household. She plants, sews, cooks, bakes, embroiders, etc. (vs. 13, 16, 18, and 19). There are some young women in America who get married knowing only three things: how to watch TV, talk on the phone, and go shopping. How does a woman learn to work a sewing machine? How does she learn to make garments, to cook, bake, and can? Her mother or some other woman must teach her! Virtuous women do not fall out of the sky! Mothers, are you raising virtuous women? Oh yes, this is for fathers too! We need to raise virtuous boys who know something about basic carpentry; fixing lawnmowers, leaky faucets, faulty light switches; and basic auto maintenance. Do your children read after great men of God and memorize scripture so they can rightly handle the word of truth (II Tim. 2:15)? With all this there will be no time for foolish things that yield no profit later in life.

A virtuous woman is a good housekeeper. "She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household is clothed with scarlet. She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness" (vs. 21, 27). A virtuous woman knows how to handle finances. "She buys a field....she maketh fine linen and selleth it" (vs. 16, 24). Her mother teaches her to budget, and the discipline of saving. How much money, how much discipline does it take for a busy woman to save enough money from making and selling linen to buy a field? Does your daughter save to buy things that are needed, or does she keep expanding her credit debt? A virtuous woman is generous. "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (v.20). Who can find a virtuous woman? Where are these woman made? The average American has debts of \$85,000 dollars and usually finances 97% of his new automobile. There is no virtue in this; it is a shame. We are not to be debtors to the world, but debtors to God.

What is the worth of such a virtuous woman? An expert from Massachusetts says that a wife, especially a mother, should be paid \$134,140/yr because she has many jobs: homemaker, daycare teacher, cook, computer operator, laundress, janitor, household manager, van driver, chief executive, and psychologist. Well, I have to tell you that the expert has underestimated. God says that such a woman is worth more than all the rubies (money) in the world. There is something else that makes a virtuous woman so valuable. It is her availability. How many grown children have said that what they treasured most in their mother was her love and availability? To a virtuous woman her husband or children are never an interruption. To her, time with her family is blessed opportunities to share her virtues with each one, 24 hours a day. This is why women were

created, this is where their anointing is. There are many grateful children who can say, "She was always there, she never let me down. She was always kind, full of love, forgiveness, wisdom, hugs, and cheer for me." When the children of available mothers find Christ they will have emotional security and stability. They will know that, as their mother was always available, so Jesus is always at their sides. A virtuous woman will be an immeasurable blessing to her husband. When she comes to motherhood she will have a unique insight about her babies. As a gardener sees a shrub in a tiny sprout, a virtuous woman sees a man or woman of God in her child. She never loses her vision of that even though the child may stray. Virtuous women must be raised so that they can become virtuous wives, and then virtuous mothers. "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her."(v.28)..., and her price is far above rubies!" (v. 10).

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