

Sermon Notes

WORSHIP SERVICE -

12.11.2022

AN EXCELLENT WIFE

I. INTRODUCTION

- God's Word affirms the beauty and dignity of womanhood and femininity.
- Wisdom and maturity in womanhood is something praiseworthy and extolled.
- Proverbs has much to say about womanhood and marriage.
- We will close out our series in Proverbs over two Sundays by looking at the Excellent wife in Proverbs.
- Proverbs reflects on the reality that a good wife is one of the most important things in life.
- Young men are encouraged and motivated to avoid making a bad marital choice and to make a wise marital choice, their choice will have an impact on them for better or worse.

Proverbs 12:4

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rottenness in his bones.

II. FINDING AN EXCELLENT WIFE

- Consider the relationship between the parallel lines that are contrasting two types of wives.
- First type: an excellent wife
- Second type: shameful wife
- These two types are contrasted by the metaphors of a crown versus decay or rot in the bones.
- Both wives have an effect on the status and wellbeing of their husband, for better or worse.
- One's effect is outward and visible to the community.
- The other's effect is inward, deep, and invisible.
- The excellent wife will produce a crown for her husband, strengthening his social standing and honor in the community.
- The shameful wife does the opposite. She robs her husband of his social standing and honor.
- It would be helpful to define what is meant by "an excellent wife."
- Different translations: NIV a wife of noble character, KJV a virtuous woman, ASV a worthy woman
- Hebrew word, "ḥayil" means strength, capacity, noble, competent.

- The word “ḥayîl” is used often to speak of military might or a warrior’s strength.
 - It is also used to refer to strength of character and capability.
 - The excellent wife is “ēšet-ḥayîl”.
 - She is a worthy woman, a noble woman, virtuous woman, a woman of strength and competence.
 - With respect to women outside of Proverbs it is used only one other time in Scripture.
 - In the story of Ruth, Boaz says to Ruth that she is known as a “worthy woman”, same phrase, “ēšet-ḥayîl” (Ruth 3:11).
 - Proverbs 31 enumerates further qualities that characterize an excellent wife.
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- The excellent wife is the type of woman that every Christian man would want to marry.
 - The excellent wife is the type of woman that every Christian woman should want to be like.

THE CROWN OF HER HUSBAND

- What does it mean that she is the crown of her husband?
 - The crown adorns the head of a king.
 - An excellent wife thus becomes her husband’s most prominent social adornment.
 - Because of her wise conduct and actions, her husband can freely exercise his role.
 - His wife does not bring reproach upon him.
 - Prov 31:23 Her husband is known in the gates when he sits among the elders of the land.
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- The excellent wife is the human reflection of Lady Wisdom.
 - Throughout the first nine chapters, Solomon is teaching and exhorting his son to pursue wisdom.
 - He portrays her as a beautiful woman that is to be sought after, loved, embraced, treasured and married.
 - When the son gets wisdom, here is what she will do for him.
 - Prov 4:8-9 Prize her highly, and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her. 9 She will place on your head a graceful garland; she will bestow on you a beautiful crown.”
 - That’s what a wise wife will do, she will honor her husband, she will crown him.
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- Keep in mind the Proverbs assumes that her husband is righteous, godly and wise.
 - An excellent wife enhances the godly man’s life and is a reward for choosing wisdom’s path.
 - Prov 18:22 He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.
 - Prov 19:14 House and wealth are inherited from fathers, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

TEACH YOUR SONS TO FIND A GOOD WIFE

- Fathers need to teach their sons how to find an excellent wife.
- Teach them to not just look for a woman that they are physically attracted to.
- Physical and sexual attraction is a major factor in finding a wife and then being faithful to your wife.
- However, it certainly can’t be the only deciding factor.
- Prov 11:22 Like a gold ring in a pig’s snout is a beautiful woman without discretion.

- Beauty is deceiving, that's the point of the Proverb.
- She might be physically beautiful, but if she lacks wisdom and discretion, it's like a pig with a gold ring in its nose.
- So we have to teach our sons not to make their choice based on external appearance only.
- We want our sons to make a wise choice about who they decide to marry.
- This decision will determine much about their life so we need to help them make the wise choice.
- We also need to teach our sons how to avoid sexual temptation and the forbidden woman.
- Not to fall for her seductive and flattering words (22:14).
- That will be an ongoing temptation in a man's life, seducing him away from wisdom's way.
- Mothers, you help your sons by modeling the characteristics of an excellent wife.
- When you embody the qualities of an excellent wife, you are reflecting to your son the very qualities he needs to look for in a godly wife.
- You are also reflecting for your daughters the kind of woman they should be in order to be sought after by a godly man who values wisdom.

A SHAMEFUL WIFE

- In what ways she is disgraceful is not made known in the proverb.
- Whereas the excellent wife brings honor to her husband, the shameful wife brings shame and suffering to the husband.
- The effect she has on her husband is debilitating in nature.
- This man did not choose wisely and it has cost him. His wife turned out to be the opposite of what he had hoped for.
- From other proverbs we can deduce how it is that she brings him shame and undermines him.
- By being flirtatious with other men and unfaithful (2:17), forgetting her marital covenant.
- By being brash and a loud mouth like the forbidden woman (9:13)
- By being quarrelsome and contentious (Prov 19:13; 21:9, 19).
- By lacking discretion (Prov 11:22).
- By being incompetent and mismanages the household (Prov 31:10-31)
- Through her overall folly (Prov 14:1)
- In these ways she brings pain to her husband.
- She slowly but continually undermines his inward happiness and outward usefulness.
- A wife who is a continual nag, who is constantly bickering, eats a man from the inside out.
- Prov 21:9 It is better to live in a corner of the housetop than in a house shared with a quarrelsome wife.
- Prov 19:13b a wife's quarreling is a continual dripping of rain.
- This type of woman demolishes her home through her word and foolish actions.
- Look at the instruction Peter gives to wives.
- 1 Peter 3:1-4 Likewise, wives, be subject to your own husbands, so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, 2 when they see your respectful and pure conduct. 3 Do not let your adorning be external—the braiding of hair and the putting on of gold jewelry, or the clothing you wear— 4 but let your

adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which in God's sight is very precious.

III. BECOMING AN EXCELLENT WIFE

- The charge for every woman is to personify Lady Wisdom.
- When you do that, you will be prized highly by the man who seeks wisdom and therefore, seeks you.
- In order to personify wisdom, you must have the fear of the Lord, that is the beginning of wisdom.
- Proverbs 14:1 The wisest of women builds her house, but folly with her own hands tears it down.
- The wise woman is a builder.
- Through the skillful employment of wisdom she builds out each room making it habitable and enjoyable for her family.
- She orders her home in such a way that wisdom is displayed.
- That is what we find Lady Wisdom doing.
- Proverbs 9:1 Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars.
- Your decisions and actions in wisdom or folly will make or break your husband in the home and in the community.
- You build your home by displaying the fruit of the Spirit.
- You build your home by giving your husband love and support.
- You build your home by making it an environment of peace where the familial relationships thrive.
- When you personify wisdom as an excellent wife, you are as wisdom to your husband, you crown him, you are well-being and life to him, and you preserve him.
- Prov 31:10 asks the question, "An excellent wife who can find?"
- The answer is "no one." The perfect attributes listed in this chapter, no one can completely measure up to.
- Yet, that should not prevent one from striving to be her.
- You will not be this by nature.
- We all fall short. We all fail to measure to the standards.
- But it starts with the fear of the Lord.
- It is a work of grace.
- True wisdom does not come naturally, it comes from above.
- This is why we need Christ.
- Here's what God did for us.
- 1 Cor 1:26-30 For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. 27 But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; 28 God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, 29 so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. 30 And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption,
- Because of Him, we are in Christ Jesus. He is our Husband.
- We are His Bride, whom he will perfect and present to himself spotless and blameless, an excellent wife (Eph. 5:27).
- By nature you are not the excellent wife, but by grace, you are that in Christ, you are the excellent bride of Christ.

APPLICATION AND REFLECTION

In light of today's message....

- What did I learn about the gospel?
- How can I apply what I learned about the gospel to my life?
- With whom can I share the gospel this week?