

Perfect Wife and Mother

Proverbs 18:22, "*He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.*"

Experts think they know the qualifications of Miss America. We are constantly being bombarded by so-called beauty-contest winner – “*Miss USA*” – “*Miss New York*” – “*Miss Universe*” – even – “*Miss Floor-Wax*” – “*Miss Better Homes*” – and – “*Miss Electric-Dryer.*”

It's time we asked, “***What are the standards set forth in the Bible for a Woman?***” That question in detail in the Book of Proverbs - chapter 31. This chapter provides a picture of ***an Ideal womanhood***, according to God's point of view. What are the standards set forth in the Bible? Who would make the **PERFECT WIFE**, according to the Bible.

1. The ideal woman is a woman who is virtuous

Verse 10 asks, “*Who can find a virtuous woman? For her price is far above rubies?*” One translation renders it, “*A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.*”

You can't build a successful marriage on moral impurity. Let me tell you single fellows, looking for a wife, the girl who is just everybody's girl, who is coarse and vulgar in her speech and actions, will not make a good wife, or mother. Habits formed *before* marriage, have a way of sticking *after* marriage. You can't build a successful home on moral bankruptcy?

A woman may be beautiful woman *outside*, however, there must be a gentility *inside*, if the marriage is going to work. If a woman is not honest with herself, she will not be honest with others.

2. The ideal woman is a stabilizing influence in her home

Verse. 11, “*The heart of her husband doeth safely trust in her,*” or, “*Her husband has full confidence in her.*” Her husband knows she will never let him down. In her quiet and efficient way, she gives him strength. She lets him know that he counts in the home. She makes him feel worthwhile, that she couldn't get along without him. She sees the best in him. She refreshes him, morally, emotionally, physically and mentally and sends him out to his job feeling that he can put up with anything as long as he is loved and appreciated at home. She never lets him down.

3. The ideal woman is an energetic woman

Verses 12-15, “*She will do him good and not evil [not harm] all the days of her life. She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar, She riseth also while it is still dark, and provides food for her family.*”

There isn't a lazy bone in her. Someone has said, “*Man works from morn to set of sun, but a woman's work is never done.*” A woman has to be chef, clothes' designer, interior decorator, gardener, educationalist, counselor, budget director, sweetheart, mother, letter-writer and always ready for an outing with the family. She holds more cabinet posts than the Premier of France.

4. The ideal woman is economical

Verses 16-19, “*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. In her hand she holds the distaff [staff that holds the wool] and grasps the spindle with her fingers.*”

She knows how to make her husband's paycheck take care of the bills. She doesn't run up bills that worry her husband. She does her own housework. She isn't bound to an eight-hour working day. She keeps at it until the work is done. She augments the family income when necessary. She keeps the family healthy and happy with good garden diet and home-cooked meals. She knows how to nurse a sick child, and cultivate the garden. On top of all this, she always manages to save a bit for a rainy day, or for a new dress for daughter's graduation. The ideal woman is economical.

5. The ideal woman is unselfish

Verse 20, “*She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.*”

You can't live with a woman who is either always right or who must always have her way. Few things rock the boat of matrimony like a demanding wife (or husband for that matter). Marriage is no place for selfishness. Show me a woman who is anxious to share and I'll show you a woman who is easy to live with and a woman who will make her husband's interests her interests.

The ideal woman has time to sit down and figure out an arithmetic problem for Johnny, to plan for a surprise party for her daughter's birthday, or to help out when a neighbor is sick. This spirit of unselfishness will do more to solve the problem of our young people today than any thing that has been advanced by our nation so far.

6. The ideal woman is emotionally healthy

Verse 25, “*She is clothed with strength and dignity.*”

Few things unnerve a man as a whining, complaining wife. Some women are an open invitation for every pharmaceutical commercial. A smart wife will guard her health. She will practice conservative habits of rest, proper food, exercise and New Testament faith. Don't allow yourself to get sloppy in appearance after marriage. A wise woman will keep herself attractive!

7. The ideal woman is cheerful

The last of verse 25 says, “*She can laugh at the days to come.*”

Proverbs 31 is talking about God's view-point of an *ideal woman*. The woman who will make a good wife according to Bible standards is found here in the Book of Proverbs. She is an optimist. She is never ready to abandon ship. A sense of humor is absolutely necessary. The woman this verse describes is cheerful because she can look ahead with delight. She has faith in the future. What if there is a set-back, things will be better tomorrow. She doesn't make an

“*Armageddon*” out of every family fuss. She knows how to discipline and she knows how to laugh. She knows that a ready smile (old fashioned chuckle) is one of nature's best proven shock-observers. Here is a woman who may cry in private, but she always smiles in public.

8. The ideal woman is wise

A literally translation of verse 26 is “*She talks shrewd-sense and offers kindly counsel*” – or, “*common sense.*” You can go to college and be active in church, but it takes more than education or *just* religion to be an ideal woman. Verse 26 speaks of woman who is, ***interesting, entertaining*** and a good ***conversationalist***. She is not someone who buries herself in some lurid paper magazine story or television soap-serial about troubled romances, but she is one who tells a moral story to her children as she tucks them into bed.

There is no possible substitute for common sense. “*Beautiful but dumb,*” will never get the job done. There must be a little wisdom behind a pretty face.

9. The ideal woman is kind

The last of verse 26 can be accurately translated, “*The law of kindness is on her tongue.*” A nagging woman is a pet peeve with God - and man! Proverbs 27:15 says, “***A continual dropping is a very rainy day, and a contentious woman, are alike!***” Scripture says, “*Endless dripping on a rainy day, that is what a nagging wife is like.*”

Both are tormenting and nerve-wracking. A smart wife will not nag, they are diplomats, not war-secretaries. So the screen door needs fixing, is it better to nag or to say, “*Honey, while I am fixing supper - and it is one of your favorite dishes - why don't you fix the screen door?*” Maybe the best way is: simply to arrange to have it fixed. It would be a lot better and safer than nagging.

Let me say something straight from the shoulder: *Most quarrels in families would be eliminated if the husband and wife were as kind and polite to each other as they are to strangers for whom they care very little!* Think it over! Why do we want to be cruel to the one we love the best? Nothing can cut nor leave as much of a scar as a sarcastic word or jibe.

“*The law of kindness is on her tongue!*”

She may not have a figure like Venus de Milo but, if she has a good word to say about others, she is quite a girl.

10. Last, but most important, *She is spiritual*

Verse 30 literally reads, “*A woman who reveres the Lord will be praised.*”

An ideal woman is one who measures up to God's standards must be a God-fearing, Christian woman. All of what I have said is important but none of it is as important as this last requisite. A woman without respect for God can never be the helpmate God intended her to be. How can she be a partner with God in training her children for their place in life without faith in God? Without God she will rear pagans. She must have faith, ideals and a purpose in life that makes her life worthwhile. She must have conviction and steadfastness.

“The spokes of a wheel hang loose if there is no hub at the center.”

Life is at loose ends if it is not fastened to faith in Jesus Christ. Without Christ on board that ship of yours will never make shore.

Wilber M. Smith once remarked, *“There is not one great American in history who was born in a home of infidelity!”* There come times in the life of every wife when they share a common experience with Abraham Lincoln who said, ***“I have been driven many times to my knees by the over-whelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go.”***

Former Governor William E Russell of Massachusetts had his boat to overturn about a mile from shore. He was not a good swimmer, and those on shore despaired of his life. When he finally reached safety, they asked, *“Mr. Russell, how on earth did you ever make it?”* He replied, *“I don't know. All I know is that I prayed to God and kept my arms and legs working.”* That's what it will take to be an ideal wife and mother.

WORK AND FAITH

You will need all that I've mentioned this evening: virtue, dependability, energy, a business sense, an unselfish spirit, emotional health, optimism, common sense and kindness. Mothers, you'll need them all, but with them, you'll need ***faith*** to be the successful woman you want to be. Work and faith will pull you through!

The historian Toynbee, writing on International Affairs a century ago, recalled that in the world's history twenty other civilizations had fallen. Reviewing world events he suggested that our own society might be in for a long decline, ending in some such revolution as that which destroyed ancient Rome. If so, the telltale sign will be the women of this nation. It will depend upon how far our mothers and wives get away from the ideal of womanhood as it is stated in the Book of Proverbs, chapter 31.

A good woman is a nation's greatest asset!

It was a good woman who nursed her husband through a long illness and one night. In the wee hours of the morning, he awakened to see her sitting by his bed, not sewing, not ministering, just sitting there. Startled, he asked what she was doing. Her reply was: *“Nothing dear! I was just sitting here loving you.”* I want to say, without any fear of contradiction, to any woman who has the ideals that is outlined in Proverbs 31 – *“Your husband never be sorry he married you and, if he had to do it all over again, he would marry the very same girl!”*