

PROVERBS, USER MANUAL FOR LIFE IN CHRIST
GRAMMA'S BLESSING
(THE BLESSING OF THE MATURE, GRACIOUS WOMAN)

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Prov 20:29 **The glory of young men is their strength, gray hair the splendor of the old.**

LAST TIME WE LOOKED AT GRAMPA'S BLESSING - HOW RICH AND VALUABLE A "GREY-HAIRED" MAN IS TO HIS FAMILY AND TO THOSE WHO MAY LOOK TO HIM FOR YEARS OF EXPERIENTIAL WISDOM. WE MUST NOT FORGET THAT NOT EVERY PERSON WHO IS OLD HAS THIS WISDOM. ONLY THE "GREY HAIR" WHO HAS SPENT A LIFETIME IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS LORD HAS THIS QUALIFICATION.

HERE'S ANOTHER IMPORTANT POINT - LET US NOT CONSIDER ONLY THE OLD PREACHER A "GREY HAIR." WE HAVE A PROBLEM WITH "SUPER-SAINTISM" THESE DAYS WHERE THE TEMPTATION IS TO LOOK TO THE VOCAL, HIGH PROFILE "SAINT" FOR THE EXAMPLE OF THE IDEAL MAN OR WOMAN OF GOD. GOD HAS NO SUCH DEFINITION OF ONE WHO IS HIS CLOSE, FRIEND. DAVID AND ABRAHAM WOULD HAVE FAILED MISERABLY AS "SUPER-SAINTS" IF WE WERE TO APPLY TODAY'S STANDARDS TO THEM. THE MAN OR WOMAN WHO SPENT A LIFE-TIME IN OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S WILL, APPLICATION OF HIS WORD, BEING A GOOD HUSBAND/FATHER OR WIFE/MOTHER AND RAISING THE CHILDREN IN THE NURTURE OF THE LORD ARE THE CANDIDATES FOR GOD'S APPROVAL AS A "GREY HAIR."

THE GRACIOUS WOMAN OF HONOR

Prov 11:16 **A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong men retain riches.**

THE HEBREW WORD *chen* (pronounced kane, translated "gracious" here) IS USED TO DESCRIBE THE BIBLICAL WOMAN OF HONOR. IT IS USED IN SEVERAL DIFFERENT WAYS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. THIS WOMAN HAS SPENT A LIFETIME OF GIVING. SHE HAS FULFILLED HER ROLE OF "HELPING."

Genesis 2:18 **And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.**

THE HEBREW WORD USED TO DESCRIBE THIS WOMAN OF HONOR IS USED 16 TIMES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT TO DESCRIBE THE HELP THE LORD GIVES TO HIS CHILDREN. THIS SAME WORD IS USED TO ELEVATE THE WOMAN TO THE SAME "HELPER" STATUS. GOD HAS CREATED MAN WITH A SURROGATE HELPER TO WORK ALONGSIDE HIM - THAT HELPER IS HIS WIFE.

BUILDING A LIFE OF HONOR

Prov 31:10 **A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies... 17 She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.**

WHEN A YOUNG WOMAN STARTS OUT IN LIFE SHE HAS MUCH BUILD INTO HER LIFE. IT IS NOT ENOUGH FOR HER TO SIT BACK AND BE PASSIVE. TO BUILD A LIFE OF HONOR **THIS YOUNG WOMAN WOULD BE WISE TO CONSIDER THE BIBLICAL "BENCHMARK" FOR GOD'S WOMAN FOUND IN PROVERBS 31.**

THIS WOMAN IS VERY DILIGENT. GOD'S WORD SAYS THAT BEING A HOME KEEPER IS AN HONORABLE VOCATION. THIS WOMAN MAKES HOME MAKING HER NUMBER ONE JOB. IT IS EASY IN TODAY'S SETTING FOR THE YOUNG WIFE TO THINK OF THE HOME AS SECONDARY IN HER PRIORITIES. FOR EXAMPLE, MANY WIVES ARE PRESSURED TO CONSIDER THEIR CAREERS AS FIRST IN THEIR LIVES AND THE HOME AS SECOND. IT IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR OUR YOUNG WIFE TO VIGOROUSLY PURSUE HER VOCATION OF HOME MAKER. SHE FACES TWO APPROACHES TO HER VOCATION AS HOME MAKER. FIRST IS THE PASSIVE ATTITUDE, AN ATTITUDE WHERE SHE DOES ONLY ENOUGH TO GET BY. THE SECOND IS THE ATTITUDE VIGOROUS DILIGENCE. THIS ATTITUDE IS BEST DESCRIBED IN ANOTHER BOOK THAT SOLOMON WROTE - ECCLESIASTES. ECCLESIASTES HAS AN INTERESTING PICTURE OF TWO KINGS WITH DIFFERENT KINDS OF HEARTS (ALLOW ME TO APPLY THIS PICTURE TO OUR YOUNG WIFE - IT MAY BE APPLIED TO THE HUSBAND AS WELL).

Eccl 10:16 **Woe to you, O land whose king was a servant and whose princes feast in the morning. 17 Blessed are you, O land whose king is of noble birth and whose princes eat at**

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a proper time--for strength and not for drunkenness.

HERE IS AN IMPORTANT LESSON THAT WE MAY APPLY TO OUR YOUNG WOMAN WHO IS TO BUILD HER LIFE OF HONOR. THE QUESTION IS, DOES SHE HAVE THE HEART OF A SERVANT¹ OR DOES SHE HAVE THE HEART OF NOBLE BIRTH. THE FIRST KING IN OUR STORY HAS THE MISERLY HEART OF A SERVANT. HE MAKES NO PROVISION FOR HIS PRINCES TO EAT AT HIS COURT. THEY MUST FEND FOR THEMSELVES AND EAT AT HOME.

THE SECOND KING HAS THE HEART OF NOBLE BIRTH AND WANTS HIS COURT TO BE JUST RIGHT. HE SEES TO THE DETAIL OF THE COURT, INCLUDING THE FEASTS, SO THAT HIS PRINCES ARE PROPERLY TAKEN CARE OF.

LET'S APPLY THIS TO THE HOME². OUR YOUNG WOMAN MUST DETERMINE EARLY ON TO RESIST THE TEMPTATION OF HAVING A SERVANTS ATTITUDE TOWARD HER FAMILY AND DO ONLY WHAT SHE MUST. **EVEN THE WORKING WIFE/MOTHER HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE TO THE PROPER MANAGEMENT OF THE HOME INCLUDING THE FEEDING OF HER "PRINCES."** THERE ARE MANY OTHER PRIORITIES TO BE CONCERNED WITH BUT THE BEGINNING OF BUILDING HONOR IN HER LIFE IS THAT OF AN INDUSTRIOUS, SELFLESS, POSITIVE ATTITUDE OF SEEING TO THE PROPER, TIMELY CARE OF THE HOME. THE HEART OF NOBLE BIRTH SEES TO THESE DETAILS OF THE HOME. THAT TAKES A LOT OF CARE AND EFFORT. **THE YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAS THE HEART OF A NOBLE SEES TO THE PROPER CARE OF THE HOME AND SO DOING BUILDS A LIFE OF HONOR FOR HERSELF.**

Prov 14:1 The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down.

THE SPECIAL MINISTRY OF THE WOMAN OF HONOR

Titus 2:3 Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. 4 Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children,

TITUS 2:3 IS THE TESTIMONY OF WOMEN OF HONOR. THEY ARE REVERENT IN THE WAY THEY LIVE - REVERENT TO THEIR LORD AND THEIR HUSBAND. THEIR TONGUE IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. THEY ARE NOT ADDICTED TO ANYTHING (WINE IS NOT THE ONLY ADDICTION POSSIBLE HERE). THE GOOD HERE IS ALL OF THE PRECEPTS, APPLICATION OF GOD'S WORD IN THEIR PERSONAL LIVES THAT MAKE FOR A CHRIST-HONORING HOME WHERE GOD'S "GOOD" RESIDES. WOMEN OF HONOR HAVE THE FAVORABLE WITNESS OF THEIR HUSBANDS AND CHILDREN³.

WOMEN HAVE THE SPECIAL MINISTRY OF SHOWING THE YOUNG WOMEN BY THEIR WITNESS AND THEIR LIPS HOW TO BE **MEN-LOVERS** AND **CHILDREN-LOVERS**. PAUL USES TWO SPECIAL GREEK WORDS TO TEACH A VERY IMPORTANT POINT THAT, I FEAR, IS MISSING IN TOO MANY MARRIAGES TODAY (*philandros*, fil'-an-dros; fond of man, i.e. affectionate as a wife:-love their husbands; *philoteknos*, fil-ot'-ek-nos; fond of one's children, i.e. maternal:-love their children). ALL YOUNG WOMEN NEED, ACCORDING TO PAUL'S TEACHING, TO BE TRAINED TO APPRECIATE⁴ AND LOVE THEIR HUSBANDS AND THEIR CHILDREN. INTERESTING, THE POPULAR THOUGHT TODAY IS

¹ Jesus referred to the same attitude in John 10:12, 13 where the "hireling" who was watching the sheep ran from the predator because the sheep were not his and he did not care about them. The young wife must guard against this uncaring, self-serving attitude in the home.

² Bear in mind that this story may be applied to the husband of the home as well.

³ Prov 31:28 Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her.

⁴ Question to the ladies. Are you a man-lover? Do you appreciate your man for *thinking* and acting like a man? Or would you like to "adjust" him - "tweak" him so that he "works better" for you? Paul teaches that young women need to learn what makes men "tick" so that they might allow them to fulfill their role in marriage.

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THAT THIS IS AN INSTINCT OF THE YOUNG, MARRIED WOMAN - NO SO! WHAT A TREMENDOUS MINISTRY THE LORD HAS COMMITTED TO THE ELDER WOMEN OF HONOR OF THE LOCAL CHURCH TODAY.

GRAMMA'S BLESSING. THE HOME IS UNDER ATTACK FROM MANY FRONTS. WOMEN OF HONOR ARE A GOD-GIVEN RESOURCE TO KEEP THE HOME SAFE FROM THESE ATTACKS. GRAMMA HAS SPENT A LIFETIME HONORING HER LORD AND HER HUSBAND. SHE HAS SPENT A LIFETIME LEARNING ALL THE "SECRETS" OF WHAT MAKES A HOME THAT HONORS CHRIST. LET US APPRECIATE AND SEEK THOSE "SECRETS."

Prov 31:30 **Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.**

GRAMMA IS A BLESSING TO BOTH THE HOME AND THE CHURCH.