

Topics in Proverbs

I. Skills in Godly Marriage - The Wife - Pt 3

A. Characteristics of a Godly Wife

1. Remember, there is no such thing as an all-godly or an all-ungodly man or woman, but all the general wisdom qualities apply equally to both

2. Wisdom

a. external beauty w/o wisdom (internal beauty) - Pr 11:22

b. discretion - *ta'am* - a taste, perception; intelligence; a mandate:-- advice, behavior, decree, discretion, judgment, reason, taste, understanding.

i. no talking of the character ditsy blond

ii. Speaks to one who has turned away from, chooses to not develop judgment or taste - Heb 5:14

c. looks fade, wisdom remains - for the man that is only attracted by looks, that shows the lack of wisdom on his part

d. Building her house - Pr 14:1

i. house - 1st husband, 2nd children

ii. Pro 31:10-31

- does her husband good, he can safely trust her

- children are well clothed, well cared for

iii. So often, caring for the home is understood as her job, but w/o wisdom, she may working on the externals w/o the internals - Pro 24:3-4; 19:14

e. able to reproduce, work hard, cook well, pretty - great, but God values wisdom - Pr 31:26

3. Intimate Enjoyment of Her Husband

a. God speaks of sexuality as a divinely mandated, mutual obligation - 1 Co 7:3-5

i. the wife has authority over the husbands body - vs 4

ii. Both Paul and Solomon warn of the exposing the mate to adultery

b. the marriage bed is to be held in honor, a place of mutual giving and receiving

4. Graciousness - Pr 11:16

a. Grace - *chen* - graciousness, (kindness) (beauty), pleasant, precious, (well-)favored.

b. A contrasting Proverb

i. Line A praises a positive quality

ii. Line B contrasts the characteristic against bold aggression

iii. Graciousness is the opposite of ruthless violence

c. Pr 31 paints the picture of a powerful woman, of great inner strength

i. she is not grabbing what she wants at any price

ii. She is not angry about being a woman, nor is she trying to be a man

iii. Secret of her character is the fear of the Lord - Pr 31:30

- by the fear of the Lord, she knows who she is

- by the fear of the Lord, she is content with her role that God gives her

- by the fear of the Lord, she has convictions and principles that provide her the foundation for all that she is and does.

d. 1 Pe 3:1-6 gives insight into this character quality

- i. first cultural problem - take the path of functional subordination - vs 1
- ii. How can the wife win God's way
 - not by verbal abuse, compelling reason, wearing him down
 - but by following God's plan of submission to her husband and God
 - what matters least about a woman - vs 3
 - what matters most about a woman - vs 4
 - Quiet spirit - trusting, patient, and self controlled
 - opposite - nagging, loud, obnoxious, witchy
 - Precious in the sight of God - valuable, very expensive, costly
 - vs 5-6 gives examples of what it looks like

5. Strength of Character - Pr 12:4

- a. Excellent - *chayil* - probably a force, wealth, virtue, valor, strength, might, substance.
- b. Used by Boaz of Ruth - 3:11
- c. Modern caricatures of the submissive woman as a servile non-person forgets the most submissive person in human history - Jo 5:30; 1 Co 11:3; 15:28
- d. Pr 31:10 indicates that she is rare and the one who finds one should raise his voice in praise to God

6. Devotion to Her Husband - Pr 31:11-12,23

- a. vs 12 explains vs 11, gives the reason why He trusts her - she won that trust
- b. no biblical command for a husband to trust a wife
 - i. presumably he does when he marries her
 - ii. If she snipes, picks, shames him (Pr 12:4), distrust will be the result
- c. vs 23 shows the heart of the excellent woman
 - i. partly b/c of her intelligence, godly devotion, her husband is freed to attain prominence and influence
 - ii. Woman was created to be man's helper in fulfilling God's vision given to him

7. Fear of Yahweh - Pr 31:30

- a. the organization factor in the woman's universe
- b. fear of the Lord enables her to see that real greatness will come to her not through self centered aggressiveness or external beauty, but through godly devotion

B. Characteristics of a Ungodly (or Foolish) Wife

1. Infidelity

- a. The strange or forbidden woman of Pr 2:16-19
- b. She hits on what is man's weak point - Flattery - vs 16; 7:5,21
 - i. all men want to hear, you're doing a good job
 - ii. if the wife isn't being an encouragement in this area, he will be vulnerable
- c. More found in *Pr 5:3-14; 6:24-32; 7:10-27; 9:13-18*
 - i. preys on weakness for sweet talk - 5:3; 6:24-32; 7:13-18,21; 9:17
 - ii. May have superficial form of religion - 7:14; inside spiritually destitute - 5:6; 7:11-12; 9:13
 - iii. Destroys both the man and herself

2. Insincerity

- a. she knows that the way to a man's heart is not through his stomach, but through his fat head - smooth and flattering words - Pr 2:16
- b. she knows the ability of the bait - Pr 5:3

- c. neither her nor her victim find what they need
- 3. Disloyalty
 - a. described as forsaking companion and forgetting covenant - Pr 2:17
 - b. adultery is the lowest form of treachery, here two acts of betrayal
 - i. having pledged singular devotion to one, seeks another
 - Pr 7:18-20 - the husband's trust becomes the occasion for her treachery
 - clues - my husband is not at (his) home
 - knows when he will come back - vs 20b
 - ii. Deliberately forgets covenant with God
 - c. also betrays the young man, she is simply using him
- 4. Destructiveness - Pr 14:1
 - a. Foolish - lit. thickheaded, dense, can apply to male or female - 1:7; 10:8,14,21
 - b. God made woman with an understanding of a healthy home and relationships
 - c. people do what they do thinking that it will make them happy
 - d. the woman's inner enemy - Ge 3:16 the desire to control her husband
 - e. She destroys the home by the measures she takes to save it
 - i. needs a happy home, desires a career
 - ii. Need for a husband that will lead, created design
 - iii. Needs to be faithful, but may think someone else can meet her needs better
 - iv. Should use her tongue to encourage her husband, but may lose her tongue to cruelly push him away
 - f. She can destroy her children by neglecting their care in favor of a career - Pr 29:15
- 5. Nagging, Argumentative, Implacable, Contentiousness
 - a. 2 ways to make man 's life grim and joyless - a stupid son, an argumentative wife
 - b. Contentions
 - i. strife, quarrels - pres. active - continual - lit. pushing, driving - used only here and 27:15
 - ii. Solomon uses it to describe a foolish wife's relentless, repulsive, argumentativeness - she disagrees with or finds fault with everything
 - c. What if her complaint is right?
 - i. the fear of the Lord waits on Him to reveal that to the hard headed man
 - ii. Two questions to consider - is there only one way to communicate a valid complaint? - is it worth driving your husband away or beating him down to get your way? -Pr 21:9,19
- 6. Contemptuous Attitude or Behavior - Pr 12:4
 - a. God's assigned role as helper, the foolish woman is the opposite of Pr 31:10-12
 - b. rottenness - *raqab* - decay, rottenness, lit. "worm eating," she causes ruin, inwardly undermining and slowly destroying
 - c. she shames her husband regardless of company
 - i. she thinks that this will work to get what she wants
 - ii. She demoralizes her husband so that he will be less likely to accomplish whatever he was or could have been
 - d. God's designed role - a helper, assistant, partner
 - i. She undermines his strength which she was supposed to supplement
 - ii. The foolish man that does this is better off alone