



INDUSTRIOUS & GENEROUS

Text: Proverbs 31:10-31

Passion City DC Pastor Ben Stuart

Read Proverbs 31:10-31. Ben reminded us that it is important to remember as we read this passage, that even though on the surface it is describing the “Proverbs 31 Woman,” the writer has spent over 30 chapters trying to instill these same qualities of wise living in his son. That means we are all meant to read this chapter with an eye to be challenged where we can grow in wisdom: the skill of living.

1. The Proverbs 31 Woman uses her skills and resources to “get stuff done,” not just for the sake of activity, but for the benefit of those around her. What skills, abilities, and gifts has the Lord given you?
 - a. She also moves to meet needs that she sees and even anticipates. What is a need in the world that stirs your heart?
 - b. And how can you use the skills, resources, and influence the Lord has given you to help meet those needs?
2. Ben explained the difference in being a thermostat and a thermometer. A thermometer checks the temperature while thermostat changes it. What would it look like to be a thermostat and not a thermometer - a force to change the culture for good - in the circles you run in, in your home, in your workplace, in your friendship circles, etc.?
3. The “Proverbs 31 Woman” uses her words to bring life to people, not cut them down. How can you grow in your personal capacity as an encourager of people and as a safe place for people to share their burdens?
4. Read Proverbs 1:7. It can be easy to read a description like this and feel the weight of this ideal standard that none of us can fully live up to. But ultimately it is her “fear of the Lord” that makes her praiseworthy. How is the fear of the Lord the undergirding of all of these other facets of wisdom described in this chapter?

Challenge: The most important application point of this chapter, and all of Proverbs, is to pursue growth in your love for the Lord. What changes do you need to make to your daily, weekly, and/or monthly rhythms so that you can be meeting with the Lord regularly to grow your love for him?

Prayer: Father God, thank you for the wisdom that comes from you through your Word. We confess that we all have tendencies to believe what culture says about who we are and who we should be. Lord, we want to be thermostats. We want to be light in the darkness. We want to be a force of good in our culture speaking life giving words to those around us and accomplishing your purposes. Give us a fear of you Lord that we may grow in our love for you. Help us to be aware of the needs around us God and let us move

towards those needs without hesitation being led by your Spirit. Jesus came and radically changed everything about the world around Him. Thank you that He was willing to give His life so that we could have ours. Make us more like Him. Amen.

STUDY DEEPER

Wisdom Is A “Who” More Than A “What”

Jesus *is* Wisdom. He is the Proverbs wrapped in flesh. They are animated and fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth.

Jesus Lived The Proverbs For Us.

And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, ‘Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.’”(1 Corinthians 1:30–31 ESV)

The Proverbs fill in the blanks for us on Jesus’s life that the Gospels didn’t set out to give us. We don’t have to wonder, “What would Jesus do?” The Proverbs tell us. They show us what he did. They show us what he didn’t do. The Proverbs give us insight into how Jesus faced the everyday matters of life, therefore discipling us into our everyday lives.

The wise life is to have the proverbial righteousness of Christ play out to every edge of life.

Wisdom is not smarts or morality. It’s not knowledge to win trivial pursuit. If we want to know what perfect wisdom looks like, there is one place to look. The Son of God. The Son of Man. Jesus.

The Hebrew word for wisdom basically means *skill*. It’s used to describe skill in war, art, and craftsmanship.

Wisdom is Christ-empowered skill to live for the glory of God.

We cannot live wisely without him. His cross, his resurrection, his Holy Spirit empowering us is the only way we can be biblically wise.

This is the *grace* of wisdom. It’s a gift, a fruit from the gospel, freely given to us by Jesus himself. He is the Sage of the sages. He is the wisest of the wise. He is greater than Solomon (Matt. 12:42).

Jesus Lives The Proverbs Through Us.

The Proverbs are not problematic for us—we have the risen Christ at work in us (Gal. 2:20). Yes, the Proverbs go against the grain of our flesh—calling us to humility and away from pride, calling us to think

before we speak, etc. The bar is high; and Christ met it. And now we can live out the wisdom of Proverbs, the righteousness of Christ, with fear [of the Lord (Prov. 1:7)] and trembling, “for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13).

If we want wisdom, if we want the Christ-empowered life, we must hear from him in the Scriptures. “Hear, for I will speak noble things, and from my lips will come what is right” (Prov. 8:6). We must take his counsel. “Take my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold” (Prov. 8:10). We must listen to ourselves far less, and listen to him far more.

Jesus is *our* wisdom. And in his grace, he freely offers it to us. “I love those who love me, and those who seek me diligently find me” (Prov. 8:17). If we go to Jesus for help, we will not find a cold shoulder. We’ll find nothing but love. Nothing but grace. Jesus sits on a throne of grace; not one of finger-wagging and tsk-tsks. “Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16)

The Proverbs are the practical righteousness of Christ, his life, played out in our sanctification. Wisdom isn’t a nebulous concept, or ancient advice for life. Wisdom is draped in Nazarene flesh. Wisdom is the Ancient of Days. And now, by the gospel of grace, Jesus is our wisdom, and our righteousness, and our sanctification.

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