

THE PROVERBS MAN (VARIOUS PASSAGES)

Last week we looked at Proverbs 31, which shows us the ideal woman of God. Girls, she is the woman you should look *to* and emulate. And guys, she's the type of woman you should look *for* and marry.

And tonight, we're going to see the Proverbs Man. Guys, this is the man you should look *to* and emulate. And girls, this is the type of man you should look *for* and marry.

The Proverbs woman is pictured in one chapter, but we have to look across the entire book of Proverbs to get an accurate picture of the Proverbs Man. So, let me give you eight characteristics of the Proverbs Man – like pieces of a puzzle that come together to create a portrait.

1. He fears the Lord.

Proverbs 14:26–27 “In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and his children will have a refuge.”²⁷ The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death.”

What does it mean to “fear the Lord?” It does NOT mean to simply believe in God and respect Him. A lot of men do those things, but so do the demons (James 2:19). The word “**fear**” means “reverence” which ultimately carries the idea of a person who *knows* the Lord, *loves* the Lord, and *obeys* the Lord. It's describing a man who genuinely walks with God by faith. And notice how his “fear of the Lord” affects him and his family...

- **Giving him strong confidence.** (vs.26a) It's NOT a confidence in himself. His love and trust in God give him a strong sense of identity, and a settled confidence when the storms of life come against him and his family. He doesn't have it all figured out, but he trusts the One who does!
- **Providing a refuge for his children.** (vs.26b) *“His children will have a refuge.”* The word “**refuge**” describes a “secure fortress.”¹ That's a tall order for a man to live up to!

¹ Ross, A. P. (1991). Proverbs. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 989). Zondervan Publishing House.

Illustration: This is why you'll hear a lot of women say, "My husband is my *steady rock*, my *calm in the chaos*, my *safe place to land*."

And the Proverbs Man brings that same kind of steady calm for his children. He's like a *refuge* as he (along with his wife)...

- Teaches God's Word to his children.
- Encourages his children to receive and follow Christ.
- Helps his children make wise daily decisions.
- Prays for his children daily.

***Show pic of father shielding his family from harm**

All of this is like a **refuge** ("secure fortress") to protect his family from the storms of life.² Keep in mind, the Proverbs Man cannot control how his children respond to him or to the Lord, but he provides this refuge in his family even still.

- **Guiding his family away from the snares of the devil.**
(vs.27) *"The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, that one may turn away from the snares of death."*

Illustration: John Phillips tells about his uncle taking him to visit *Hampton Court* in London – a famous palace that has a huge maze made from hedges. They paid their money to enter and, after only a few turns they were lost. All paths looked the same and seemed to lead to nowhere. They wandered around in that maze for an hour and when they arrived back in the middle for the third or fourth time, they decided to sit down on the benches that were provided (because they knew you would need them!).

His uncle had been to Hampton Court before, so he pointed to a bell button and said, "Press that." After pressing it, an attendant soon appeared and said, "You fellows lost? Follow me." He took a few turns here and there, and soon they were back outside. *They* didn't know the way, but the *attendant* did.

The Proverbs Man is like that attendant for his family. As he loves, trusts, and follows Christ, the Lord uses him to lead his family *to* the fountain of life and *away* from the devil's snares.³

² Ross, A. P. (1991). Proverbs. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 989). Zondervan Publishing House.

³ Phillips, J. (2009). *Exploring Proverbs 1–19: An Expository Commentary* (Vol. 1, Pr 14:26–27). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp.

Real manhood starts with the fear of the Lord!

Real-Life Application:

- He prioritizes his spiritual life over popularity or success.
- He makes decisions based on what honors God, not what is easiest.
- He practices daily habits of prayer, Scripture, and humility.

2. He is teachable.

Proverbs 13:1 "A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke."

The Proverbs Man values truth more than his own pride. No one likes to be corrected, but a wise man "hears" instruction and learns from it. But the scoffer isn't teachable – they "scoff" at instruction and correction...

Proverbs 15:12 "A scoffer does not like to be reproved; he will not go to the wise."

You see, a *scoffer* is the highest level of a fool. This is the type of man who has no respect for authority, and he scoffs at religion because he thinks he knows what is best. He's not teachable.⁴

So, when a parent, coach, teacher, or police officer corrects him – he says, *"How dare you disrespect me like that!"* But a Proverbs Man says, *"My growth matters more than my pride."* So, the wise man allows himself to be disciplined.

Real-Life Application:

- He "hears" correction instead of shutting down or getting defensive.
- He learns from mistakes instead of denying or blame-shifting.
- He seeks wise mentors and authority figures.

3. He controls his words.

Proverbs 10:19 "When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent."

In other words, the more you talk, the easier it is to fall into sin. But a

⁴ Ross, A. P. (1991). Proverbs. In F. E. Gaebelin (Ed.), *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs* (Vol. 5, p. 974). Zondervan Publishing House.

restrained mouth is a sign of wisdom.⁵ You see, there's a time to speak and a time to be silent. Guys, we should be praying that God would give us the wisdom to know the difference.

Proverbs 17:27 "Whoever restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding."

A Proverbs Man speaks up when he should, but he also keeps silent when he should. His speech is thoughtful, calm, and life-giving. And only God can give us the wisdom and strength to control our tongue like that!

Real-Life Application:

- He avoids gossip.
- He encourages people instead of tearing them down.
- He is honest and respectful with authority figures (parent, teacher, coach, elders, law enforcement, etc.).

4. He works hard and acts responsibly.

Proverbs 10:4–5 "A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.⁵ He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame."

In the book of Proverbs, laziness often refers to people who start a task but they walk away before it is finished. In verse 5, it's the son who helped plant the crops in the summer but he's not there during harvest to finish the task. So, he brings shame to his family.

In our day, it's the guy who wastes *hours* on social media instead of finishing a task (like studying). It's the guy who can't/won't KEEP a steady job and provide for himself or his family.

But here's the problem – hardly anyone realizes that *they* are a lazy person. No one has ever walked up to me and said, "Pastor Gene, I'm really struggling with laziness." But, the Proverbs Man avoids laziness – he works hard and acts responsibly...

Proverbs 22:29 "Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men."

In other words, the ideal man is diligent, dependable, and prepared.

⁵ Akin, J. (2017). *Exalting Jesus in Proverbs* (D. Platt, D. L. Akin, & T. Merida, Eds.; p. 203). Holman Reference.

Real-Life Application:

- He takes initiative instead of waiting to be told.
- He studies even when it's boring.
- He shows up prepared.
- He does his best even when he doesn't feel like it.
- He finishes tasks that he starts.
- He manages time and money wisely.

5. He lives with integrity.

Proverbs 28:6 "Better is a poor man who walks in his integrity than a rich man who is crooked in his ways."

He's not saying ALL poor people walk with integrity. Nor is he saying ALL rich people are crooked in their ways. He's simply saying that integrity is to be valued and pursued above all else – including all the riches in the world!

You see, the word "**integrity**" means *blameless* or *innocent* (not perfect). In other words, the Proverbs Man is the same person in private as he is in public.

Real-Life Application:

- He tells the truth even when it costs him.
- He keeps his promises.
- He chooses long-term character over short-term gain.
- He has the same values at work, school, home, online, church, etc.
- He doesn't live a double life.

6. He treats others with kindness and justice.

Proverbs 21:3 "To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice."

The Proverbs Man cares about people, especially the vulnerable.

Micah 6:8 "He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Real-Life Application:

- He helps people who can't repay him.

- He treats everyone with respect.
- He stands up for what is right, not just what is popular.

7. He practices self-control.

Proverbs 25:28 “A man without self-control is like a city broken into and left without walls.”

A man who can't control his temper, his mouth, or his lust is like a city with broken walls. He's highly vulnerable because his enemy will soon find his weak spots and exploit them.⁶

So, the strength of a man is shown through *discipline*, not *domination*. A great example of this is Samson. He didn't control his...

- **Lustful choices** (Judges 14:1–3) – He insisted on marrying a Philistine woman simply because she looked good, despite his parents' objections.
- **Impulsive revenge** (Judges 14:19) – After losing a bet, he angrily killed 30 men to pay his debt.
- **Explosive anger** (Judges 15:7–8) – When the Philistines made him mad, Samson picked up the jawbone from a dead donkey and went on a rampage killing 1,000 men!
- **Sexual immorality** (Judges 16:1) – He visited a prostitute, ignoring his calling and ruining his witness.
- **Careless pride** (Judges 16:6–17) – He repeatedly toyed with Delilah and eventually revealed the secret of his strength, showing his overconfidence and lack of discipline.

Real-Life Application:

- He controls his anger and his impulses.
- He sets boundaries to avoid temptations.
- He chooses discipline today for a better future tomorrow.
- He thinks carefully before he responds.

8. He is faithful in relationships.

Proverbs 20:6 “Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, but a faithful man who can find?”

⁶ Phillips, J. (2009). *Exploring Proverbs 19–31: An Expository Commentary* (Vol. 2, Pr 25:28). Kregel Publications; WORDsearch Corp.

A lot of men will *say* they are faithful, but unfortunately, lots of men do not keep their word or remain loyal to their commitments. But the Proverbs Man is loyal, trustworthy, and committed.

Application

- He is honest and dependable with friends and family.
 - He values covenant and commitment over feelings alone.
 - He builds trust through consistent actions.
 - He keeps his promises.
 - He doesn't abandon people when it's inconvenient.
-

Small Groups