

LOVE BEHIND THE SCENES
DRS. ROGER AND JULIE BARRIER
PROVERB 31
MAY 11, 2008
S-1754

ROGER

Turn in your Bibles to Proverb 31. Most of the time, Proverbs 31 is taught by a man like a report card for women. How do you stack up next to this spiritual superstar? This was not the intent at all.

SLIDE #1: PROVERBS 31:1: The sayings of King Lemuel — an oracle his mother taught him:

Notice, this passage was not written by Lemuel. He was merely taking dictation. Proverbs 31 was written by a mother—Lemuel’s mother—in order to teach her son how to value and appreciate the things a wife and mother does for her family.

This is the Mother’s Day passage of the Word of God.

SLIDE #2: Proverb 31 encourages us to Recognize And Appreciate The Ways A Wife And Mother Ministers To Her Family “Behind The Scenes.”

VIDEO: THE MYSTERY

JULIE

Our moms are really super-heroes—and like all super heroes they usually have secret identities.

SLIDE #3: Judy Wyatt-Mother of Kimberley

SLIDE #4: Her secret identity? Sharp shooter.

ROGER

SLIDE #5: David Baum’s wife Kristi-mother of Ruth Ann and Katrina.

SLIDE #6: Her secret identity? A C-130 aircraft commander

JULIE

SLIDE #7: Lana Page-Mother of Brent and Stacy, grandmother of Kepler and Annabelle.

SLIDE #8: Her secret identity-among many...Built two log cabins with her bare hands, rode in the rodeo parade, beauty queen.

SLIDE #9: Angie Barteau-mother of Coley and Chandler

SLIDE #10: Her secret identity? marathon runner.

ROGER

SLIDE #11: Helen Barrier—mother of Roger and Ronnie. It was many years before I was willing to recognize that she had a life before me. She was in a league of her own.

SLIDE #12: She played first base for the Litchfield Tigers up in Phoenix while being “Rosie the Riveter during WWII-a welder on B24 airplanes.

Who is King Lemuel?

Some theologians believe that Solomon penned these words because no king of Israel or Judah ever had the name Lemuel.

Besides, many historians argue that this chapter could not be written by a man who had 700 wives

and 300 concubines, and did not exemplify a monogamous, godly husband and father. Bathsheba? Pseudonym because of her adultery?

The composer of this passage may be a mystery, but the wise words are eternal.

JULIE

In Proverb 31:10 Lemuel's mom summarized her teaching in one-far-reaching statement.

SLIDE #13: Proverb 31:10: A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

“Noble character” does not begin to capture the meaning behind this powerful Hebrew word!

Let me share some English synonyms that might help: power, strength, mentor, virtuous, war.

What she is really saying is:

SLIDE #14: Who can find a gutsy mom? Every day a mom wakes up it seems like the war is on. She intercedes for her husband and children.

She prepares to solve every crisis—from a lost sneaker to a host of destructive influences that bombard her little flock: from playground bullies and catty middle school girls to pornography; from illicit drugs to casual sex. It's all out there.

Her tendency is to hide her brood under her wings and never let them learn to fly. The courage comes when she leads them into an intimate relationship with Jesus that allows them to walk into any scenario and respond with grace and faith.

Trusting God to help them own their own faith is the ultimate test of trust.

ROGER

SLIDE #15: Proverb 31:10: “... She is worth far more than rubies.”

In 2006, a single ruby sold for \$5,860,000: enough said.

Beginning in verse 15 Lemuel's mom details mom's amazing work behind the scenes.

SLIDE #16: Proverbs 31:15: “She provides...for her family”

And now begins the litany of her behind the scenes work—and sacrificing for her family.

(If your mom didn't do all these things, she did many other things that probably went unnoticed by her family.)

JULIE

In the Jewish culture around 950BC, the Hebrew wife would have had specific duties that included obeying her husband, milling the grain, cooking, washing, and making the meals, nursing the infants, weaving cloth and making the family's clothes.

There were no malls, no microwaves, and no TV dinners.

The husband also had responsibilities in the marriage: to provide food, clothing, lodging, conjugal duties, buy back his wife if she was captured, get medicine if she was sick, and if she kick the bucket, hire 2 flute players and a wailer for her funeral!

SLIDE #17: In addition to the basic list, she also:

- Respected God
- Was generous to poor people
- Trusted by her husband
- Used her money wisely
- Worked hard
- Taught others
- Was loyal
- Filled with wisdom
- Had many skills
- Was humble

ROGER

The first section of Proverb 31 talks about the value of the wife and mother.

The last four verses (Proverb 31:28-31) describe some of the ways family and friends can affirm and appreciate her.

Notice that four distinct groups of people honor her with praise: Her children; her husband, God and the people of the city.

SLIDE #18: Proverb 31:28-31: Her children arise and call her blessed;

her husband also, and he praises her:

29 "Many women do noble things,
but you surpass them all."

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

31 Give her the reward she has earned,
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

JULIE

Let's focus for a moment on each of these four groups who praise and honor mom.

SLIDE #19: "HER CHILDREN RISE UP AND CALL HER 'BLESSED.'"

Praise from her children.

At first glance, just rising up could be miraculous—for kids to roll out of bed without an earthquake or a cattle prod would make mom happy.

What about if they actually dressed themselves and brushed their teeth without an act of congress? Could that make life easier for mom?

Most of our children are in "Neighborhood lights during this service.

But many children are still in this service today.

At breakfast did Mom have to pull you apart from your little sister while you covered her face with jelly?

Did she have to beg you to wear new underwear?

Could she actually find a path to your bed in that trash pit called your bedroom?

Was there yelling and screaming in the car on the way over here?

Or on the way to church this morning did you happily jump in the car ON TIME, telling mom how pretty she looked, and how glad you were that she was your mom?

How about a new way to love mom? Let's call it "rise and shine..." with emphasis on both Rise—and Shine

JULIE

SLIDE #20 Let's see...hours of screaming labor, about a million poopy diapers, thousands of loads

of laundry, years and years of sleepless nights...

SLIDE #21 and you get a mother's day card...sounds fair.,

ROGER

SLIDE #22 Picture of child and monkey in a crib

SLIDE #23 Happy mother's day from me and my brother.

JULIE

SLIDE #24 Picture of mom and daughter—hair in curlers—screaming at each other

SLIDE #25 Wherever did I get this attitude? Happy Mother's Day

ROGER

SLIDE #26 Now, I don't want you to think this next one is out of taste—it really is tasteless—but unfortunately we see too much of it every where we look these days.

SLIDE #27 Thanks to you, Mom. I know better. Happy Mother's Day!

SLIDE #28 Maybe you should call their mothers.

JULIE

SLIDE #29 Mother, your love has always been there....

SLIDE #30 In lunch box notes and late-night lectures, cookies and costumes, setting boundaries and letting go. You're the constant, the comfort, the porch light that stays on, and I love you from here to forever. Happy mother's day.

ROGER

SLIDE #31: HER HUSBAND ALSO (CALLS HER BLESSED), AND HE PRAISES HER: "MANY WOMEN DO NOBLE THINGS, BUT YOU SURPASS THEM ALL."

SLIDE #32: Husband in Hebrew: babler, bird, confederate, dreamer, hairy, horseman, lord, master.

JULIE

Let me put a few of these descriptions together: He shall be called:

SLIDE #33: "Captain Dreamer"; "Furious Bird"; "Confederate Horseman"

SLIDE #34: Husband can mean hairy babler. "Now, I'm just quoting scripture...."

ROGER

I am certain that women want to call men all sorts of names—But he also can be called:

SLIDE #35: captain, chief man, great, master and best of all, husband!

By the way, look at the praise a loving and thoughtful husband lavishes on the mother of his children:

SLIDE #36: "He praises her: "many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."

SLIDE #37: Literally: "Many apples of the eye stand out in a crowd, but you top them all. You're the best fruit in the bunch."

JULIE

SLIDE #38: Proverb 31:11: "Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value."

The wife is often the husband's main confidant-entrusted with every secret... After counseling for many years, husbands and children, here is what we have learned about your mom, or your wife:

She doesn't just carry her own hurts and burdens. She carries yours as well.

For example, when a husband comes home griping about the mean boss at work, he dumps his hurt and frustration on his wife. He now feels much better after venting his pain. When he goes back to work, he may well restoring that relationship and everything is fine—but he never tells his wife and she still stresses over it.

The wife, however, is left with the hurt. She never sees the restoration, she never has the opportunity to respond to the boss....so the husband heals and the wife is left with a gaping wound and a lot of anger.

Often we hear the words, "The wife doesn't have a reason to cry because it did not happen to her." The truth is it DID happen to her. Her husband needs to be sensitive to what he shares and give her updates on the progress of the relationship, and he needs to realize she needs to mourn and be comforted as well.

Example: Two Rats in a Cage.

ROGER

Focus on wife; word about husbands. The reason she can do this is because she has full confidence and support from her husband.

Roger complaining re Julie's inconsistent laundry system: never on time, lose socks.

Wanda: "if you don't like it, why don't you do your own laundry?"

So I do—I haven't lost a sock in 25 years.

SLIDE #39: PROVERB 31:30: CHARM IS DECEPTIVE, AND BEAUTY IS FLEETING; BUT A WOMAN WHO FEARS THE LORD IS TO BE PRAISED.

Praise from her Lord.

Throughout History God Has Praised And Honored The Godly Women Who Honor Him.

SLIDE #40: Miriam, Moses' sister, a worship leader and song writer who helped to lead Israel out of Egypt, had her lyrics appear as part of the Old Testament Torah.

SLIDE #41: Deborah led armies in the Book of Judges.

SLIDE #42: Mary Magdalene was the first woman to witness the resurrection, even before the disciples.

SLIDE #43: Priscilla was the second best preacher in the New Testament, next to Paul. Many theologians say she probably wrote the Book of Hebrews.

JULIE

Living a life of faith wasn't easy for a woman. Can you imagine that walking by faith, or trusting God to lead your husband, is a challenge?

SLIDE #44: Think of poor Eve- she wakes up one day, scarfs down a piece of fruit and causes the fall of mankind. Her husband has to go to work. And she gets no epidural for labor.

Her oldest son murders her youngest son. Talk about being alone. That's a rough start.

SLIDE #45: Then there was Mrs. Noah-raising her children with a crazy person building a boat the size of a hotel. She spends her days shoveling manure and trying to keep her grandkids away from Mr. and Mrs. Python.

SLIDE #46: Sarah's husband Abraham packed up their huge extended family and all of their worldly goods. When she asks Abram where they are going, he says "I'm not quite sure..." God told Abram these things, but Sarah had to have blind faith. What if Abram's dreams were the result of too many mutton sandwiches?

And his judgment wasn't always perfect. He tells Sarah to enter Pharaoh's harem to save his neck. Sarah had to wait 90 years or more to have a baby. Talk about nasty stretch marks.

ROGER

SLIDE #47: Then there was Mary-pregnant as a young teenager-unfairly called promiscuous and almost stoned for a crime she did not commit.

When she came to have Jesus circumcised in the Temple, Simeon says her baby was born to die. Mary loses her husband Joseph, and her son quits the family's carpenter business (their only livelihood) to wander around infuriating the religious leaders of his day. But as she followed her son, she never forgot the angel visits, or Joseph's dream, or the wise men's gifts. When He performed His miracles she set aside her role as mother and became His disciple. She watched Him brutally beaten and crucified.

He was God's only Son, but He was her son, too. Yet, she believed he was God, this baby she bore, and awaited His resurrection. Mary was at the upper room waiting for the Holy Spirit to fall as Jesus had promised. She transitioned from caregiver to servant.

The point of this little narrative is that the men in their lives were heralded for great faith. But could you imagine that it would take great faith to trust the men in their lives to follow God. Their faith was blind, yet beautiful.

SLIDE #48: Kathy McMillan sent us a short article that puts mothering in proper perspective.

It is the story of a mother building great cathedrals of children all behind the scenes—when no one is watching.

JULIE

It all began to make sense, the blank stares, the lack of response, the way one of the kids will walk into the room while I'm on the phone and ask to be taken to the store.

Inside I'm thinking, "Can't you see I'm on the phone?" Obviously not. No one can see if I'm on the phone, or cooking, or sweeping the floor, or even standing on my head in the corner. It's like I'm invisible.

Some days I am only a pair of hands: Can you fix this? Can you tie this? Can you open this? Some days I'm a TV guide used by them to answer, "What number is the Disney Channel?" Some days I'm a taxi: "Pick me up at 5:30, please."

My hands once held books and my eyes studied history and my mind graduated summa cum laude—but now I have disappeared into the peanut butter, never to be seen again.

One night, a group of us were having dinner. Janice had just returned from a fabulous trip to England.—and she was going on and on about her adventures.

It was hard not to feel sorry for myself as I looked around at my friends all dressed up so well.

I looked down at my out-of-style dress.

My unwashed hair was pulled up in a banana clip and I was afraid I could actually smell peanut butter in it.

I was feeling pathetic, until Janice gave me a book on the great cathedrals of Europe. I read her inscription:

SLIDE #49: "To Charlotte, with admiration for the greatness of what you are building when no one sees."

One story in the book told of a rich man who visited a cathedral under construction. A workman was carving a tiny bird on the back side of a beam:

"Why are you spending so much time carving a bird that no one will see? The workman replied, "Because God sees it."

Immediately I sensed God whispering to me, "I see you, Charlotte. I see the sacrifices you make every day, even when no one else does. I see your acts of kindness. I notice the sequins you've sewn on. No cupcake you've baked is too small for me not to smile over.

You are building a great cathedral, even if you can't see right now what it will become."

I keep the right perspective when I see myself as a builder. As one of the people who show up at a job that they will seldom if ever see finished.

When I really think about it, I don't want my son to tell the friend he's bringing home from college for Thanksgiving, "My mom gets up at 4 in the morning and bakes homemade pies, and then she hand bastes a turkey for three hours and presses all the linens for the table." That would mean I'd built a shrine or a monument to myself. I just want him to want to come home—and say to his friend, "You're gonna love it here."

SLIDE #50: And one day, it is very possible that the world will marvel, not only at what we have built, but at the beauty that has been added to the world by the sacrifices of invisible women.

ROGER

SLIDE #51: PROVERB 31:31 GIVE HER THE REWARD SHE HAS EARNED, AND LET HER WORKS BRING HER PRAISE AT THE CITY GATE.

Praise from her peers.

At the city gate the town leaders met to carry out the legal business of the city—where important announcements were made, where the law was read, and prophets delivered their messages. Lemuel's mother teaches that a godly woman is to be recognized, respected, and affirmed in public by her peers.

She should be praised and honored by her church, her friends, and her neighbors.

Praise [halal] comes from a root word meaning to make a show, to boast; to rave and shout like an out-of-control fool.

We did this several weeks ago for our returning Global Outreach leasers.

Mothers, would you please stay seated as we have the fathers and kids make fools of themselves for you! Let's stand, shout, celebrate, and brag on her.

SLIDE #52: SOME HOMEWORK:

GIVE a copy of the top ten needs in the insert. You could suggest that husbands and children list some practical ways they could meet these top ten needs for the wives and mothers and other

significant women in their lives-as homework, or for a few minutes (3-5) during the service.
This could be a quiet time of reflection, or a discussion in threes of the people around them.

Pick out just one and give it to mom today.

●SLIDE #: Acceptance

Affection

Appreciation

Approval

Attention

Comfort

Encouragement

Respect

Security

Support