

“Advice from Mom”

(Proverbs 31)

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I. Introduction

A. The impact of mothers

1. Leave a legacy that will span the generations
2. The little things
3. The brilliance of Benjamin West
 - a. Chronicled the founding fathers
4. The role his mother played in his painting

One day his mother went out leaving him in charge of his little sister Sally. In his mother's absence he discovered some bottles of colored ink and began to paint Sally's portrait. In doing so he made a considerable mess of things with ink blots all over. His mother came back. She saw the mess but said nothing. She picked up the piece of paper and saw the drawing. "Why," she said, "it's Sally!" and she stooped and kissed him. Ever after Benjamin West used to say, "My mother's kiss made me a painter." Encouragement did more than rebuke could ever do.

B. We salute you

1. The impact of my mother
2. The greatest soul winners in the church
 - a. Pleading with God for the souls of their children
3. And then there are “Grandmothers”
 - a. Now that Carolyn has entered that proud fraternity
 - b. They don't look so old now that I'm married to one
 - c. The long wait is over

C. The value of mom's advice

1. The Book of Proverbs
 - a. A collection of wisdom that fathers and mothers were to pass on to their children
2. Closes with advice from an unknown mom to her son
 - a. What to look for in a future wife
 - b. Every mother's concern
3. One of the most powerful passages of scripture
 - a. Every mother strives to be a Proverbs 31 woman

II. Text

A. Let's meet the players (v. 1-2)

(1) The sayings of King Lemuel—an oracle his mother taught him: (2) O my son, O son of my womb, O son of my vows,

1. Only time Lemuel is mentioned
 - a. His mother is unknown
 - b. We'll just call her "mom"
2. Jewish mothers and their sons
 - a. Seem to possess a practical wisdom
 - b. Want the best for their sons
3. Her tender pleading with her son
 - a. *"O my son"*
 - b. *"O son of my womb"*
 - c. *"O son of my vows"*

1. Promise to God regarding him

B. Some general instructions for her son (v. 3-9)

1. Don't spend your energy chasing the wrong women.....v.3

(3) do not spend your strength on women, your vigor on those who ruin kings.

- a. Don't spend your energy chasing women
- b. Damage done before marriage
 1. Be careful
- c. Especially those who will ruin your life
 1. "those who ruin kings"

2. Don't let alcohol cloud your judgment....v.4-7

(4) It is not for kings, O Lemuel—not for kings to drink wine, not for rulers to crave beer, (5) lest they drink and forget what the Law decrees, and deprive all the oppressed of their rights. (6) Give beer to those who are perishing, wine to those who are in anguish; (7) let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.

- a. Don't let alcohol cloud your judgment

3. Stand up for those in need.....v.8-9

(8) Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. (9) Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy."

- a. Key responsibility of leadership
- b. "The helpless...the homeless...the hungry"

C. But most importantly...find a good wife (v. 10)

1. What to look for in a wife

(10) A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. (11) Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. (12) She brings him good, not harm all the days of her life. (13) She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands. (14) She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. (15) She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. (16) She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. (17) She sets about her work

vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. (18) She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. (19) In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. (20) She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. (21) When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. (22) She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. (23) Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. (24) She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes. (25) She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. (26) She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue. (27) She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. (28) 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.

D. Let's take a look at Mom's Checklist (v. 10-31)

1. Does she have noble character? (v. 10)

(10) A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.

a. Looking for the wrong things in a wife

"Typically men seek a wife for all the wrong reasons; looks, accomplishment, style, success, money, education, all the wrong reasons.

They should seek a woman of virtue, strength of character, spiritual excellence, godliness. A woman who will leave a mark on those around her."

b. The importance of character

1. She will make a difference....leave a mark

2. Her influence will span the generations

c. If you had to choose from the following

1. Wealth?

2. Property?

3. Great job?

4. Stunning beauty?

- 5. Noble character?
- d. Would like “all of the above”
- e. But a wife of noble character is the most valuable
 - 1. Honest
 - 2. Self-sacrificing
 - 3. Treats people with integrity and respect
 - 4. Strong during the tough times

2. Can you trust her? (v. 11-13)

(11) Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. (12) She brings him good, not harm all the days of her life. (13) She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands.

- a. The power of trust
 - 1. The absence of worry
- b. When spouses don't trust each other
- c. Looking for a person you can trust
- d. She never speaks evil of her husband
 - 1. When I hear somebody doing it
 - 2. The importance
 - 3. He trusts her words
- e. They brag about each other
- f. They keep each other's secrets

3. Is she a hard worker? (v. 14-19)

(14) She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar. (15) She gets up while it is still dark; she provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls. (16) She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. (17) She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. (18) She sees that her trading is profitable,

and her lamp does not go out at night. (19) In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.

- a. The importance of hard work
 - 1. The young moms this morning
 - 2. A lifetime commitment
- b. She's an entrepreneur
- c. Moms that do whatever is necessary

4. Does she have compassion? (v. 20)

(20) She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

- a. Nothing sweeter than the heart of a mother
- b. Does she have a tender heart?
 - 1. The hard-hearted woman
- c. Look for a woman that cares about others
- d. The search for a beautiful heart

5. Is she organized? (v. 21-24)

(21) When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. (22) She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple. (23) Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. (24) She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.

- a. She knows that it's not always sunny
- b. She makes provision for the family
- c. She goes above and beyond
 - 1. The linen and purples
- d. She sells her products

6. Does she possess faith and wisdom? (v. 25-26)

(25) She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. (26) She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

- a. The wisdom that grandma can teach you
- b. Life is one continual school
- c. She speaks with wisdom
- d. She has a teacher's heart
 - 1. Makes sure her children are ready for life
- e. Will she be capable of sharing her faith with your children?

(26) She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

- 1. The importance to your children

7. Will she become the nurturing center of the home? (v. 27)

(27) She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

- a. What it takes to run a household
- b. What could be more important
- c. How this role has been downplayed
- d. The key to a safe and loving home
 - 1. A retreat from the struggles of the day

E. Her Reward

1. She'll be cherished by her children (v. 28)

(28) Her children arise and call her blessed

- a. The 2nd half

“The first half of their lives, women make an investment...and they reap the greatest dividends in the second half. Mothers who raise their children as God instructed...when her children are old enough to be on their own, they will spend the rest of their lives blessing the woman who gave her life to them.”

“As the children become older, they have their own children. And they seek to raise their children as they were raised. And therefore their mother is constantly before their eyes, her tender guidance, her wise counsel, her loving discipline, her holy example, her hard work, her unselfish giving. They never cease to fill the memories of her children who try to pass them on to their children.”

- b. The value of your children’s opinion of you
- c. Our 5 kids and Carolyn
- d. They cherish her...and put up with me

2. *She’ll be praised by her husband (v. 28-29)*

(28) 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.”

- a. His words to her
- b. She is the star of his world
- c. As the years go by

3. *She’ll be honored by all who know her (v. 30-31)*

(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.

a. ***“charm is deceptive”***

- 1. “charm” (Hebrew)... “bodily form”
- 2. What men are attracted to
- 3. Doesn’t mean she has to be unattractive
- 4. But physical beauty can be deceptive

b. ***“and beauty is fleeting”***

- 1. The anniversary section of the paper
- 2. Beauty is not enough

c. We are instructed to ***“give her the reward she has earned”***

1. What will her reward look like?
 2. Chocolate after the service!
- d. People will talk about her love and commitment
- e. Matthew Henry said “*Proverbs 31 is the mirror against which every Christian woman must stand and face herself.*”