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## Introduction

Title: Strong Women

Text: Proverbs 31

Theme: Many women have to face a disparity in wage earnings, sexual harassment in the workforce and constant body shaming. The result is often a very different upbringing for males compared to females. Women, especially minorities, are encouraged to be self-sufficient and educated, while males are often permitted to take the scenic route to maturity. Males are allowed to be brash while women are intimidating if they're too bold. Mother's Day is a moment for us to praise women for all that they do, all the pressures they face, and all the problems they solve.

## Discussion

Read Proverbs 31

This proverb does not so much build of a logical argument – as it does link a series of observations about a woman of virtue.

1. When many women read this proverb they often feel that they will never measure up to this woman. She seems far above any kind of attainable reality. It is at this point that we need to remember that this is a composite. Take note that the focus of this text is the character of the woman – not the deeds of the woman. Why do you think character is more important than the deeds of this woman?
  - a. For those of you with children have you had a serious chat with them about what to look for in a spouse? What qualities would you look for in a spouse for your child? Is your list of qualities the same as Proverbs 31?
2. A woman of noble character is a woman who demonstrates her noble character through: her loyalty (verse 11,12) She is loyal to her husband. Describe loyalty. What does it look like to you? Why is it an important quality in a person/marriage?
3. In Proverbs 31:13-19 we read that the woman of noble character is a willing worker. Men and women...how would you describe your attitude about work (in your place of employment and working around the house)? Are you a willing worker?
4. In Proverbs 31:20-22 we read of her love for others and verses 23-27 speaks of her light – the light of her character shines brightly upon her husband who is respected by others because of her. What kind of things can we do for our spouses/friends so that they are held with respect?
5. Think about the front covers of magazines and newspapers that you see at the checkout stand of your local supermarket. What kind of beauty is displayed there? Proverbs 31 tells us that “charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.” From this we learn that there is an inner beauty, an authentic beauty that will never fade away. Do you know people who reflect this beauty? How did they get this way? Write down three things you think you could do to help you develop this inner beauty.

## **Additional Reading**

Additional Scriptures on valuing the strength of women

1 Timothy 3:11

Proverbs 11:16

Titus 2:3-5