

God's Blueprint For The Home

Lesson 5: God's Blueprint For The Wife And Mother



Discovering God's Word
Bible Study Series

God's Blueprint For The Home

Lesson 5: God's Blueprint For The Wife And Mother

Learn about God's picture of a virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 and some responsibilities God has given the wife and mother toward her husband and children

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Discovering God's Word Bible Study Series

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Written by Eric Krieg

About the author: My name is Eric Krieg. I am a disciple of Jesus, a Bible student, a truth seeker, and an evangelist. My interest is in using the Bible as my only guide in my faith. My desire is to help others understand the message of the Bible and pursue true, New Testament Christianity.

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My plea: It is my hope and prayer that you are searching for the truth that is contained in God's word, the Bible. My desire is to help you understand and obey these truths God has revealed in the pages of His word. It is to that end that I write this material. Please observe all of the Scripture references and evaluate whether the conclusions I have drawn are in harmony with God's word. If they are, I ask that you make honest application of those truths to your life and obey God's instructions.

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Lesson 5:

God's Blueprint For The Wife And Mother

God has given each member of the home a specific role to fulfill. As the Architect of the home, He is the one who knows how the home will be the most successful. So, if we are interested in building according to God's blueprint, we must observe these roles and fulfill them to the very best of our abilities.

The roles in the home are not up to our own private interpretations or opinions. Instead, we must recognize that God has carefully assigned each one. As such, every role is crucial to the wellbeing of the home. The role of the wife and mother is no different.

Although we have discussed the fact that the man has been designated by God as the head of the home, perhaps we could then say that the woman is the backbone of the home. Her role (though not the same in authority) is critical to the success of the home. It is sad to see the success, then, that Satan has had in convincing both men and women that women should seek other roles besides the one God has assigned. The results have truly been devastating!

You see, Satan is trying to convince men and women that God's roles for women are "old-fashioned," "out-of-date," "oppressive," and "demeaning." Thus, as Satan succeeds in this regard, he succeeds in pulling homes into chaos and danger. So, we must consider the true value and beauty of a virtuous woman fulfilling her God-given role in the

home. Not only will this be in the best interest of her soul and her family, but it will also be the only role that will lead her to experience the greatest fulfillment in life.

The Virtuous Woman

Proverbs 31:10-31 provides all women a God-given model to emulate in the home. But, before we study the description of this woman, I want to make two observations. First, this passage records advice that a mother gave to her son (who was either king or would become king, Proverbs 31:1). So, men should look to this passage as advice for what they ought to look for in a wife. Second, this is not some "superwoman" standard that cannot be achieved by women today (or else this passage would be useless advice to a son who was seeking a wife). Instead, all women today can demonstrate the same level of virtue, diligence, and care that this woman demonstrated toward her family.

Verse 10

"Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies" (Proverbs 31:10). Here is a woman of strength, courage, and excellence. She demonstrates this excellence in every area of her life – in her marriage, in her work as a mother, etc. As we will see, this woman always works diligently for the good of her family. And, the question, "Who can find a virtuous wife?" does not imply that she *cannot* be found. Rather, it implies that she is *rare* and extremely valuable (far above rubies)! She is diligent and passionate about everything that she does. She *excels*. She is far from *mediocre* as a wife and mother. Therefore, as we will see later, this is a woman who will be praised.

Verse 11

"The heart of her husband safely trusts her; So he will have no lack of gain" (Proverbs 31:11). Trust is an essential part of any successful home. Every member should have confidence that all the others are acting in the best interest of the family. The virtuous woman does this. Wives are often left

to take care of the most important physical things that their husbands have. Her responsibilities include taking care of his physical needs (i.e. preparing his meals and clothes), taking care of his children and tending to their needs, managing household affairs, etc. In addition to this, there is no one who should share a greater emotional bond with her husband than her. Thus, she holds his secrets, his fears, his anxieties, his insecurities, etc. But, this woman has proven herself to be so worthy of her husband's trust that he never has to concern himself with any of these things that have been entrusted to her. He knows that "gain" will be experienced in everything that his wife touches.

Verse 12

"She does him good and not evil All the days of her life" (Proverbs 31:12). Since she has proven herself to be excellent and trustworthy, his heart is assured that she will be working for the good of the home in everything that she does. He is not concerned about her making decisions that undermine the wellbeing of his family. She prospers in the things that she does and provides a peace of mind to her husband that is invaluable to him! She never takes a "day off" from working for the good of her family.

Verse 13

"She seeks wool and flax, And willingly works with her hands" (Proverbs 31:13). Notice that this woman has a knowledge of how to take care of her family. She seeks out the things that she needs (i.e. wool and flax), likely so that she can prepare clothing for her family. But, she is not just knowledgeable of how to do the tasks that her family needs her to do, she is also a *willing* worker. This woman is proven to be a hard worker throughout this passage. Here she is seen putting her knowledge to work to take care of her family's needs.

Verse 14

"She is like the merchant ships, She brings her food from afar" (Proverbs 31:14). She seeks out the things that her family needs and enjoys to the best of her ability. Like merchant ships, she is willing to go to great lengths to accomplish this work. Perhaps

this even shows her industrious nature in being willing to make trades in order to give her family the things that she could not otherwise provide them. Again, the good of her family is her focus.

Verse 15

"She also rises while it is yet night, And provides food for her household, And a portion for her maidservants" (Proverbs 31:15). The fact that this virtuous wife had maidservants does not discount her diligence in her work. Actually, it enhances it. Notice that even though she has maidservants, she is the one who is rising "while it is yet night" (before daybreak) in order to make sure that her household and maidservants have everything they need for the day. Therefore, this woman is not a lazy woman who stays in bed while her family is up. Instead, she sees the need to rise early and make the necessary provisions for the day.

Verse 16

"She considers a field and buys it; From her profits she plants a vineyard" (Proverbs 31:16). She is a woman of common sense and wisdom. Notice that she "considers" the field rather than acting rashly. She surely wants to make certain that it will be in the best interest of her family. She is industrious. Notice that it is from her own profit that she plants a vineyard. Therefore, she is not laying any undue burden upon the family because of her decisions. Instead, she is demonstrating such care in everything that she does that she is causing her family to prosper.

Verse 17

"She girds herself with strength, And strengthens her arms" (Proverbs 31:17). Although the Bible teaches husbands to show honor to their wives as to weaker vessels (1 Peter 3:7), this does not mean that women are so feeble they cannot work. Here is an excellent example of a woman who is not afraid of doing some hard work. Although husbands should recognize the physical limitations of their wives, wives should be diligent in doing whatever they are capable of doing to benefit the family. Notice also that she works to do even more in the future (i.e. she "strengthens" her arms). For, she

recognizes that her family is depending on her accomplishing her work.

Verse 18

“She perceives that her merchandise is good, And her lamp does not go out by night” (Proverbs 31:18). She sees the profit in her work. She does not “sell herself short” on what she has been working to accomplish. And, her diligence does not end when the sun goes down. Instead, she is even diligent in caring for her family into the night hours. Perhaps we would even say that this woman is always “on call.” She is never truly “off,” because she is always ready to respond to any need of her family.

Verse 19

“She stretches out her hands to the distaff, And her hand holds the spindle” (Proverbs 31:19). Here is another picture of this woman’s diligence in working to provide for her family. She is industrious, not just to buy the things that her family needs, but to work to provide for them. She has the knowledge of how to keep the home and see to it that the needs of her family are met to the best of her ability.

Verse 20

“She extends her hand to the poor, Yes, she reaches out her hands to the needy” (Proverbs 31:20). She is not a selfish woman. And, she is not just concerned about the needs of her own family. She has a heart of compassion (like Jesus) and wants to help those who are less fortunate than she and her family. Therefore, she tries to do whatever is within her ability to help others. In doing so, she will certainly be teaching her family the value of caring for others, according to God’s command in Galatians 6:10. Thus, she recognizes the truth of Jesus’ teaching that it is more blessed to give than to receive (Acts 20:35).

Verse 21

“She is not afraid of snow for her household. For all her household is clothed with scarlet” (Proverbs 31:21). She is not afraid of the challenging circumstances (i.e. of winter) that lie ahead because she has made diligent preparations for them. Neither she or her family will be caught unprepared because

she has been working toward this goal to see that her family is properly equipped to face the challenges as best she can (i.e. with the proper clothing). So, her foresight has saved her family from potential struggles and disaster.

Verse 22

“She makes tapestry for herself; Her clothing is fine linen and purple” (Proverbs 31:22). Here is another picture of this woman’s industrious nature. Notice that she makes these things for herself. So, it is not that she, her family, and her home does not have nice things. But, she is willing to work for them. Although her focus must not be put on having fancy things (see 1 Timothy 2:9-10 and 1 Peter 3:1-6), she is well-dressed.

Verse 23

“Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land” (Proverbs 31:23). Her husband is in a place of honor and respect among the people. The context implies that this is aided by having such a good companion in his wife. Certainly, such an excellent wife has played an important role in her husband’s success. And, because she does such an excellent job at caring for the things that have been entrusted to her, his heart can safely trust in the job she does and he can focus on the work that he needs to do (i.e. to support his family, to work for the Lord, etc.). Furthermore, there is nothing about his wife’s conduct that would take away from the respect and honor that he has.

Verse 24

“She makes linen garments and sells them, And supplies sashes for the merchants” (Proverbs 31:24). This woman put the skills that she had to work in order to make a profit for her family. Using skills that she already possessed in taking care of her family, she made extra income for her family. Please note that in doing this, there is no indication that she left any of her other responsibilities undone. In fact, nothing about her work took away from her family. It only enhanced her contribution to the family.

Verse 25

“Strength and honor are her clothing; She shall rejoice in time to come” (Proverbs 31:25). Whenever she considers the future, she can look to it with joy and anticipation. The reason she can do this is because of how she has conducted her life in the past. Nothing in how she has conducted herself will cause her or her family to reap harmful effects. Instead, because of her wisdom, good stewardship, and godliness, there is only the expectation for good in the future for both herself and her family.

Verse 26

“She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness” (Proverbs 31:26). First, she possesses wisdom and kindness herself. She works to learn and live according to the wisdom that comes from God and she treats everyone with respect. Then, she works to teach others these same ways. So, she does not give bad advice to others. And, she is certainly working diligently to teach these things to her children.

Verse 27

“She watches over the ways of her household, And does not eat the bread of idleness” (Proverbs 31:27). This woman recognizes that the care of her household is a primary responsibility in her life. And, she does not face this responsibility with dread, but embraces it and tries to take full advantage of it. She is not a “lazy housewife” by any means. Everything that has depicted her in this passage is such that she is a diligent and industrious worker who always looks out for the best interest of her family.

Verse 28

“Her children rise up and call her blessed; Her husband also, and he praises her” (Proverbs 31:28). Her diligent and loving care for her family does not go unnoticed. Although she does not do it for the praise, those who are in her household appreciate the diligent work that she does for them. Her children recognize the love of their mother when they are young and develop a greater appreciation for her as they get older, and her husband praises her for

her works. So, godly husbands and children appreciate and praise this virtuous woman. They do *not* make her feel like a piece of property, take advantage of her, or belittle her contribution! Instead, they recognize how important she really is to the wellbeing of the home.

Verse 29

“Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all” (Proverbs 31:29). The husband of this virtuous woman recognizes her true worth to him and his family. Although many women do *well* in their roles, he recognizes that his wife has excelled above every one of them! She has acted with such excellence and virtue in the interest of her family that everyone has prospered – in so many ways!

Verse 30

“Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised” (Proverbs 31:30). Although this woman may have been beautiful (from a physical perspective), she was so much more! Physical charm often deceives people and external beauty fades away. But, this woman fears God and lives in obedience to Him. This is why she has acted with such excellence in caring for her family. And, although the world puts its focus on physical beauty and charm, it is this virtuous woman who is worthy of praise!

Verse 31

“Give her of the fruit of her hands, And let her own works praise her in the gates” (Proverbs 31:31). No one has to make this woman “look good” to be appreciated. Instead, this woman’s work and loving care for her family have been apparent to everyone who has observed her. Therefore, the fruit of her own work will cause others to praise her for her diligence in serving the Lord and her family!

Applications and conclusions

Although this virtuous woman is found in the Old Testament, it remains unchanged as God’s inspired picture of a woman who is to be praised. Unfortunately, many will dismiss this picture of the virtuous woman as being an “impossible” fantasy.

Yet, all that we have observed is a woman with a deep commitment to please God and work in the best interest of her family. She is industrious and works hard to do this important work. Therefore, any and every woman is capable of setting her mind on being this virtuous woman!

The Virtuous Woman As Wife

Up to this point, we have been discussing a model that all wives and mothers would do well to emulate. Now, we want to get specific as to the roles God has assigned them in the home. Certainly, virtuous women will live in the fear of God and do their very best to fulfill their God-given responsibilities. Specifically, we first want to focus on the God-given role of the virtuous woman as a wife.

Live as a “help meet”

Whenever Adam was alone in the Garden of Eden, God saw that it was not a good situation and made a “helper comparable to him” (Genesis 2:18, a “help meet for him,” according to the *King James Version*). So, it is a fitting observation to recognize that men were not created for women, but women for men. God expects and desires for wives to provide suitable companionship and help to their husbands. She will do this only if she fulfills her God-given role in the home. Perhaps most of all, fulfilling this responsibility will require a time commitment, as she will be unable to be a suitable helper without committing time to her husband.

A wife has the great and unparalleled opportunity to either do a great amount of good for her husband or a great deal of harm to him. Listen to this reflected in the book of Proverbs. Proverbs 12:4 says, “An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who causes shame is like rottenness in his bones.” Proverbs 18:22 says, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the Lord.” Proverbs 11:22 says, “As a ring of gold in a swine’s snout, So is a lovely woman who lacks discretion.” Proverbs 14:1 says, “The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish pulls it down with her hands.”

Proverbs 21:9 says, “Better to dwell in a corner of a housetop, Than in a house shared with a contentious woman.” Proverbs 27:15-16 says, “A continual dripping on a very rainy day And a contentious woman are alike; Whoever restrains her restrains the wind, And grasps oil with his right hand.” Clearly, either a wife will fulfill her God-intended role as a suitable helper for her husband or be a hindrance to him.

Love him

As we discussed in lesson 2, God expects love to be shown in every aspect of the home. This is no less true about the wife’s responsibility to love her husband. In fact, she should be committed to learning from older women how she should love her husband (Titus 2:4). This goes far beyond saying “I love you” and expressing romantic feelings.

The love that a wife must have for her husband is that she always acts in his best interest. So, she is aware of his needs (i.e. physical, emotional, spiritual, etc.). She is not focused on her own selfish desires and pursuits in life. Instead, as a suitable helper for him, she always conducts herself in a way that is good and beneficial for him (whether he recognizes and appreciates it or not).

Live in submission

Many in the world today will not like this point. Yet, God instructs women to be in submission to their husbands. Titus 2:5 says that the older women should train the younger women to be “obedient to their own husbands.” Ephesians 5:22-24 says, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.” Colossians 3:18 says, “Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.”

1 Peter 3:1-6 says, “Wives, likewise, be submissive to your own husbands, that even if some do not obey the word, they, without a word, may be won by the conduct of their wives, when they observe your chaste conduct accompanied by fear. Do not let your adornment be merely outward—

arranging the hair, wearing gold, or putting on fine apparel—rather let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the incorruptible beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is very precious in the sight of God. For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands, as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.”

Wives are daughters of Sarah (the faithful daughter of God and wife of Abraham) *if* they will be submissive to their husbands. To “submit” is to yield to the will or desires of another. It is to be obedient to another. So, whenever there are differing opinions in the home, God has given the wife responsibility to yield her opinions and judgments to her husband (who is the leader of the family). And, notice that this is not just her responsibility whenever her husband makes the decision that she wants him to make. Instead, Ephesians 5:22-24 gives her this responsibility toward her husband “in everything” (as the church submits to Christ). Recognize that there must not be two heads of the home!

Unfortunately, husbands do not always provide their wives with the proper leadership and they use this commandment to their own selfish advantages. Still, this does not change the wife’s responsibility. Ultimately, she keeps this commandment in order to please the Lord, even if it means that she will not be treated well by her husband. There is only one exception that God has given to this submission. Remember that she is to submit to her own husband “as is fitting in the Lord” (Colossians 3:18). So, if there is ever anything that her husband demands from her that causes her to violate His commands or her role in the home (including her conscience), she must choose to obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

Show respect

In submitting to her husband, she does not show spite or contempt for God’s arrangement of the home. Instead, she is careful to show respect to her husband as the God-appointed head of the home. Ephesians 5:33 says, “Nevertheless let each one of

you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.”

So, she must not be going behind her husband’s back and acting contrary to his authority. She must not be putting him down in front of others. She must not always be second guessing his decisions. Instead, she must treat him with the respect that is due to one God has given authority.

Now, this certainly does *not* mean that she must always agree with her husband. However, just as Christians have the responsibility to submit to and respect the governing authorities and elders of the church even though they might not agree with their judgment (see Romans 13:1-7 and Hebrews 13:17), Christian wives must submit to and respect their husbands – as long as they do not cause their wives to violate God’s will. Ultimately, a Christian wife’s respect for her husband’s authority should stem from her respect for the Lord’s authority!

Keeper of the home

There has been a great shift in culture over the past several decades (one that shows no signs of slowing). Today, most women decide that they should get college educations and/or enter the workforce full-time in order to be the primary provider for the family or provide additional income to support their family’s standard of living. It is considered “old-fashioned” for women to be “homemakers.” Yet, this is exactly what God expects of wives.

Titus 2:4, again, teaches that the older women are to teach the younger women to be “homemakers” (Titus 2:4-5). The idea is that they are to have the rule over the domestic affairs of the home. So, God gives wives specific responsibility to keep the home. Therefore, the idea of women cooking for their husbands, cleaning the house, doing the laundry, etc. is not out-of-date for Christian wives. Instead, it is a key part of their God-given responsibilities as wives!

But, what about a woman who takes a secular job outside of the home? Sometimes this is done out of necessity (i.e. her husband cannot find work, her husband is disabled, her husband is unwilling to work, she is widowed, etc.). Sometimes, situations demand it. But, there are many situations in which

wives *choose* to work – not to meet actual *needs* but to have nicer things, out of the joy of pursuing a career, because she desires to get away from the home, etc. To these, we must simply recognize that while there are many Biblical examples of women working (i.e. the Proverbs 31 woman, Lydia, Priscilla, etc.), there are no approved Biblical examples of women working *at the expense* of fulfilling their roles as homemakers! Surely, Christian women (as well as men) must recognize that being homemakers according to God’s standards is a full-time responsibility that is full of blessings and fulfillment, and one that should not be quickly dismissed in pursuit of secular employment!

The Virtuous Woman As Mother

In addition to these responsibilities God has given to a Christian woman as wife, those who want to please God must also recognize their responsibilities as mothers. Certainly, a woman who is committed to excellence in the service of God and her family will do the very best she can to fulfill these roles.

Bear children

When addressing younger widows, Paul wrote, “Therefore I desire that the younger widows marry, bear children, manage the house, give no opportunity to the adversary to speak reproachfully” (1 Timothy 5:14). Having children is uniquely a role that only women are capable of fulfilling. And, this is one of their highest callings in life – as well as one of the most fulfilling! Although God does not look with despair upon women who are unable to bear children, Christian wives should consider the opportunity to do so a great privilege.

But, God does *not* just want women to bear children. Instead, He cares about how women will treat these children once they are born. He expects mothers to care for the welfare of their children, tend to their needs, etc. Just like we saw regarding husbands, this will require a great time commitment

from women to take care of their children in a way that would please God!

Love them

Just as Christian women must be trained to love their husbands, they also must be trained “to love their children” (Titus 2:4). Once again, they must always act in the best interest of their children – physically, emotionally, spiritually, etc. They must not be seeking their own selfish desires and ambitions above the wellbeing of their children.

While their children are very young, this loving care certainly includes feeding them, changing them, holding them, etc. But, as their children grow, this also includes teaching them how to function in society and behave in a way that would please God. Of course, what Christian mothers should love the most about their children is their souls! Therefore, they should not do anything to jeopardize the spiritual wellbeing of their children.

Train them

Although the father takes the lead in training, mothers have a great role. In fact, it will be the mother who implements much of the father’s training. After all, she is (as homemaker) the ruler of the household domestic affairs. This includes dealing with the children throughout the day (as their father may be away). So, she also must be committed to following God’s blueprint for raising children.

Listen to Proverbs 22:6 again (as we read in lesson 4). “Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.” This training will take time and requires three elements: A proper example, teaching, and discipline. It should be a tremendous comfort to a husband to know that while he works, his wife is committed to training his children in the way they ought to go!

A primary focus of her training ought to be spiritual. Remember, the virtuous woman fears the Lord (Proverbs 31:30). Therefore, she desperately desires to pass her knowledge of God’s word and the fear of the Lord on to her children. For instance, Paul said that “from childhood” Timothy had “known the Holy Scriptures” which were able to make him “wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”

(2 Timothy 3:15). Earlier in the letter, Paul acknowledged that this was due to the fact that his grandmother (Lois) and mother (Eunice) passed on their faith to him (2 Timothy 1:5).

Keep the home

Being a keeper of the home (the ruler of the domestic household affairs) is not just applicable to how the wife treats her husband, but also to her children (Titus 2:4-5). Again, 1 Timothy 5:14 says that younger widows were to remarry, bear children, and “manage the house.” This is even more of a full-time responsibility than just taking care of a husband!

Christian mothers should make sure that their houses are in order (i.e. things are in their places, the vacuum cleaner is run), meals are prepared for the wellbeing of their children, clean clothes are ready, broken things are mended, the dirty dishes are cleaned and put away, school work is done well, etc. After all, Christian mothers should recognize that their example is also working to train their daughters how to manage the home and shows their sons what to look for in a future wife. Furthermore, mothers need to be around the home in order to make sure that their children are behaving properly throughout the day. It is sad that many mothers *choose* to neglect these responsibilities and leave their children to take care of themselves, watch themselves (we often call these “latchkey children”), or be entrusted to the care of another. Mothers, please know that your children need you around the house (whether they know it or not)! There is no substitute for a mother who manages the house well!

Conclusion

Wives and mothers have been given an extremely important and valuable role to fulfill in the home. Although this role is often frowned upon by the world, the negative effects of wives and mothers failing to fulfill their God-given roles as virtuous women are felt every day in the majority of homes in this world! The consequences of failing in this role are too severe and the benefits of fulfilling this role are too great to neglect. So, God is searching for

women who will commit themselves to rising above the standards set by the world and humble themselves before *Him* in order to do His work for their families!

Study Questions

How is Satan trying to destroy the role of the wife and other in the home?

1. The Virtuous Woman

Describe the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31:

*Verse 10 –

*Verse 11 –

*Verse 12 –

*Verse 13 –

*Verse 14 –

*Verse 15 –

*Verse 16 –

*Verse 17 –

*Verse 18 –

*Verse 19 –

*Verse 20 –

*Verse 21 – Explain the wife’s responsibility to submit to her husband.

*Verse 22 –

*Verse 23 – Explain the wife’s responsibility to respect her husband.

*Verse 24 –

*Verse 25 – Explain the wife’s responsibility to be the keeper of the home.

*Verse 26 –

*Verse 27 –

3. The Virtuous Woman As Mother

Explain the woman’s responsibility to bear children.

*Verse 28 –

*Verse 29 –

Explain the mother’s responsibility to love her children.

*Verse 30 –

*Verse 31 –

Explain the mother’s responsibility to train her children.

*Verse 32 –

Explain the mother’s responsibility to be a homemaker for her children.

What applications can you make from this text? Is it possible for women today to be this virtuous woman?

2. The Virtuous Woman As Wife

Explain the wife’s responsibility to live as a “help meet.”

Explain the wife’s responsibility to love her husband.