

Behind Every Good Man...

Proverbs 31:11

Dependable. Steadfast. Trustworthy. Wise.

Are these words that you would use to describe yourself most days?

Why do our lives so often fail to reflect these characteristics?

Sometimes it is because we are self-focused. When we are looking to ourselves to work things out we often begin to panic when we realize that we can't. Or we are so busy trying to make ourselves happy that we have no time or energy left for those around us. Sometimes we do not follow through with things that we have promised to others because we are overcommitted or because we think that our everyday actions will not make a very big difference in that person's life.

Even the most responsible of us can begin to slip into being an undependable person when our focus shifts to the wrong place or when we lose focus altogether.

When was the last time you were undependable?

What was the heart cause behind it?

God is the most dependable, faithful individual you will ever know. He is always present when we need Him and He never fails to do something He has promised.

What prompts us to be dependable? We are more dependable when we have prioritized our time and effort according to God's priorities. This may mean sitting down and figuring out which items must be deleted from your schedule. It may mean simplifying your life. It may mean being deliberate about setting aside time to relax in God's presence, or taking better care of yourself so that you are not tired and frazzled, but are healthy and able to be fully available when a need arises.

One important thing to remember is that we are only responsible for certain things. The book *Boundaries*, by Henry Cloud and John Townsend¹ communicates the fact that many problems arise when we either refuse to take responsibility for the things that do fall within the realm of our responsibility or when we take on things that are not meant to be our responsibility. Many times we either become needy and unnecessarily draining to others, or we are allowing ourselves to be pulled so many different directions that we end up in a state of pain and confusion, unable to do anything well.

There is a calmness that seems to be a part of dependability. When a person is overwhelmed or just barely holding on themselves, they are usually not a per-

"The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain."

Proverbs 31:11

¹Cloud, H., & Townsend, J. (1992). *Boundaries*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

son one can look to for support, and people may look elsewhere for that support.

How does it make you feel when you come into contact with someone that is “just barely holding on”?

This seems to be one of the characteristics that is spoken of in Proverbs 31. Verse 11 says, “The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain.” You have probably heard the phrase, “Behind every good man is a great woman.” Whether or not this saying is true, each one of us is to have the attitude of Christ. He demonstrated an attitude that served faithfully with a humble spirit. He was willing to take on the least desirable task to let someone else have the honor. He was the ultimate example of one who could be taken at his word, who would do whatever was necessary to demonstrate His unending and sacrificial faithfulness and dependability.

This will mean that you cannot be there for everyone when they need you. There will be times when you must say no to opportunities. But being truly available and trustworthy to a few rather than being superficially available to many is a trade off that is well worth it.

Why is it so hard to say “no” sometimes?

Noah’s wife was an amazing example of a woman who was dependable and trustworthy. Though we do not have many details about her life to read of in Scripture, and we do not even know her by her own name, we can gather an idea of some of the characteristics she seemed to demonstrate as she fulfilled her role as Noah’s wife. She was apparently a help and support to her husband. We do not hear anything of her complaining, arguing, or trying to convince Noah that he should do something different. This is in stark contrast to Job’s wife, who told him to “Curse God and die!” She did not leave Noah when he was doing what must have seemed insane to those around them. We do not hear of any counterproductive words or actions in all of the years that she was a part of the process of building an ark, and we can only assume that she did all she could to aid the process. By Scripture’s relative silence about her, it implies that Noah’s wife was doing exactly the thing that she was needed for in this situation, supporting her husband in what God had directed him to do.


Why does being dependable and trustworthy tend to be a more silent characteristic, as in the case with Noah’s wife?

Just as we often brush off those closest to us or give them the leftovers of our time and our love, do we not have a tendency to do that the most with the One who loves us the most and has given everything for us?

Beginning to develop a dependability, trustworthiness, and faithfulness in our relationship with the Lord is a good beginning place for developing those same traits in our relationships with others. As you spend time with the Lord and allow Him to teach you about having a faithful heart, ask Him to give you a better understanding of His own heart of complete trustworthiness and to develop that same heart attitude in you, as well. Ask Him specifically to show you instances in which you can have an impact on another’s life by demonstrating genuine

“The LORD’S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.”

Lamentations 3:22-23



trustworthiness, and then do it.

What do you need to do in response to this lesson?
