

Days of Our Lives

Proverbs 31:12

"An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels. The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack of gain. She does him good and not evil All the days of her life."

Proverbs 31:10-12

Proverbs 31:12 speaks about the godly woman doing her husband "good and not evil all the days of her life."

What do you think the above verse means?

Obviously, the idea of doing good rather than evil to someone (in this case specifically, one's husband) can take on many forms, both large and small. It can involve anything from marital faithfulness, to taking a minute to pray for your husband's meeting at work. One thing that can be especially hurtful to men is when they are made to appear foolish in front of others. This can seem like harmless teasing to women, and may be something to which the man has admitted, but for this to be brought up before others can be especially harmful, and should be carefully avoided.

How have you seen public teasing affect someone's husband?

Proverbs 31 speaks of this idea in verse 23 where it talks about the woman's husband being known or respected at the gate of the city. She has done nothing to degrade her husband before others, and represents him well wherever she goes, both verbally, and by her own actions and reputation. Certainly, the husband has faults, and we can be sure that the wife knows those faults and weaknesses better than anyone, but she does not use this information against him. The concept of doing someone good and not harm includes faithfulness, respect, and speaking positive words both to and about them.

What kind of impression are you giving of your husband?

What kind of reputation are you giving to the Lord?

Scripture gives a couple of examples of women who demonstrate this characteristic of lifelong faithfulness and dedication to bringing the Lord and their spouse good and not harm.

One of these women was Mary. She was chosen by God because of her faithfulness when she was a young girl, even before she was married (Luke 1:30) and though some scandal surrounded her and Joseph's betrothal, she was not responsible for it, and she did remain faithful to her husband and to God.

Anna is another example of this trait on the other end of the spectrum from Mary. Luke 2 says that she had only been married 7 years when she became a widow, and that, now at age 84, she "never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers." The temple is where we find her when she receives the blessing of meeting the infant Jesus. Though there are only three verses in Scripture about this woman, we learn that she was faithful despite her

*“For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.”
Ephesians 3:14-19*

age, she was faithful though life’s circumstances were difficult, and she continued in faithfulness year after year.

Also, Noah’s wife, though she is never mentioned by her own name, is also an example to us of a woman who did her husband good and not harm throughout all of her days.

Now, let’s be honest. It is easy to lose our perspective, right? Not every day is one that makes us want to give ourselves in service to others and do whatever is necessary to bring them good and not harm. I know I certainly have days that I want to think only of myself. I am tired of doing things for other people, listening to their problems, and being available to them. I just want someone to think about me (and not because they want something from me).

Describe a recent day when you were “fed up” with others? What brought you to that point?

When I experience these times, I can know that there is someone who wants to pamper me and lavish me with good things. He also wants better for me than to have a self-centered and greedy attitude. There is a balance. I often receive both love and chastisement from the Lord at these times that I am being oh so needy and selfish. Just when I am beginning to whine to the Lord and tell Him how tired I am and how I neither can nor want to do anything else for anyone else at the moment, I am struck by a beautiful sunset that God has chosen to bless me with, then reminded of how very silly I am being.

Christ is our constant. Christ understands those really hard days, and the days that we are tempted to think only of ourselves, the days that our view of life and our circumstances is narrow and self-centered, and He loves us in spite of that. He is the strength for the weary (Isaiah 40:29) and His compassions are new every day (Lamentations 3:22-23). Every day!

What is something good you have done in the past?

What is something good that you one day dream of doing?

Don’t wait for tomorrow and don’t be content to the point of apathy with what you have done in the past.

It is part of who we are. When we have grounded our identity in the love of Christ, our faithfulness will not just be an action here or there. Our faithfulness will be a constant outpouring of His character through us and into others.

Ephesians 3:14-19 holds the key to how we can get to this point. Stop and read those verses right now.

Now, read them again. Slowly.

Paul is praying that the believers would be strengthened. He is praying that they would be grounded in the knowledge of Christ’s love. He is praying that they would be filled with love.

This is where the daily and lifelong faithfulness comes from.

“For I know the plans that I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope.”
Jeremiah 29:11

The Lord’s faithfulness to us is daily, constant, and not dependant upon what we do or don’t do. Jeremiah 29:11 shows us the Lord’s own example of doing good and not harm. Notice the similarity of wording between this verse and Proverbs 31:12. Doing others good and not harm is the very definition of love and what God constantly demonstrates to us.

You may have noticed that most translations of Proverbs 31:10 speak of an excellent or virtuous wife. Does that mean that this passage had application to only those women who are married? Not at all. Proverbs 31:12 says that the godly wife does her husband “good and not evil all the days of her life.” Leslie Ludy, in her book *Authentic Beauty*, points out that this passage does not reference “all the days they are married” or even “all the days that she is in a relationship with him.”¹ “All the days of her life” implies that this woman is acting in a way that does good to her husband even before he is her husband, and even before she has met him. She speaks about how this is demonstrated in the single woman’s life as she waits for the God’s timing and pursues purity as she does. We are to be faithful to our husbands, whether we have met them yet or not. For those who remain single all throughout life, we can return to the illustration of God as our husband that is referenced in Isaiah 54:5 and Revelation 19:7-8 and find that we, too have a husband to whom we are to be faithful all the days of our lives.

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

¹Ludy, L. (2003). *Authentic beauty*. Sisters, OR: Multnomah Publishers.