

Proverbs - Men & Women

Children's Message: Honesty 1



When George Washington was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet of which, like most little boys, he was extremely fond. He went about chopping everything that came his way.

One day, as he wandered about the garden amusing himself by hacking his mother's pea-sticks, he found a beautiful, young English cherry tree, of which his father was most proud. He tried the edge of his hatchet on the trunk of the tree and barked it so that it died.

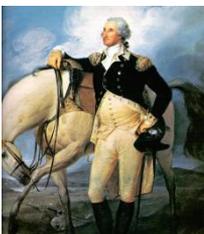


Some time after this, his father discovered what had happened to his favorite tree. He came into the house in great anger, and demanded to know who the mischievous person was who had cut away the bark. Nobody could tell him anything about it. Just then George, with his little hatchet, came into the room.

"George," said his father, "do you know who has killed my beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden? I would not have taken five guineas for it!"

This was a hard question to answer, and for a moment George was staggered by it, but quickly recovering himself he cried: --

"I cannot tell a lie, father, you know I cannot tell a lie! I did cut it with my little hatchet."



The anger died out of his father's face, and taking the boy tenderly in his arms, he said: --

"My son, that you should not be afraid to tell the truth is more to me than a thousand trees! yes, though they were blossomed with silver and had leaves of the purest gold!"

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Proverbs 6

Proverbs was written as a handbook

for the young princes of the Israelite Nation.

It therefore has a relatively male bent.

This should not be read as male chauvinism but as a peek into a specific culture and way of life.

As you will see, despite the address to young men, it is relevant to all.

There are many aspects of the relationship between men and women but we will only visit the three most important.

This is not only for those who are married, but for those about to be married, those who are single and even those who are broken-hearted.

The Mystery of Men & Women

Proverbs 30:18 & 19

There are three things that are too amazing for me,

four that I do not understand:

the way of an eagle in the sky,

the way of a snake on a rock,

the way of a ship on the high seas,

and the way of a man with a young woman.

The three and four listing is a poetic device meant to call attention to the fourth item.

The eagle in the sky are the feelings of soaring and elation.

The way of the snake on the rock as it writhes

may refer to difficult wrestling of feelings of uncertainty.

The ship on the seas alludes to chaos between the calm and the turbulent.

All this points towards the way of a man and woman.

This is one of my favourite verses about men and women.

It admits what all people know - there is no reason or rhyme

No science to the chemistry of falling in love.

Falling in love - infatuation is real and it is a mystery.

Poetry is about using words to evoke feelings.

And there is nothing more visceral than relations between men and women.

Faithfulness & Exclusivity

Proverbs 5

- ¹⁵ *Drink water from your own cistern,
running water from your own well.*
- ¹⁶ *Should your springs overflow in the streets,
your streams of water in the public squares?*
- ¹⁷ *Let them be yours alone,
never to be shared with strangers.*
- ¹⁸ *May your fountain be blessed,
and may you rejoice in the wife of your youth.*
- ¹⁹ *A loving doe, a graceful deer—
may her breasts satisfy you always,
may you ever be intoxicated with her love.*
- ²⁰ *Why, my son, be intoxicated with another man's wife?
Why embrace the bosom of a wayward woman?*

This passage is essential instruction to the princes
regarding right relationships in the eyes of God.

Never, never, never be in a sexual
relationships with a woman who is not your wife.

This is so counter cultural in this day and age.

People sleep with whoever they want.

Children as sexually active at an early age and face peer pressure.

All forms of sexual behaviour have become normal.

The Bible has only one standard.

What makes the relationship of a man and women special
is faithfulness and exclusivity.

Not only within marriage but even before marriage.

Dating, courtship is not fooling around with someone else's heart.

It grows out of the understanding of the deep feelings of sexuality.

It is a gift but such gifts can be also made to cause deep suffering.

We have all seen too many broken hearts

Some of them our own.

The princes are told - you are to have eyes for no one but your wife.

Most sweetly - the wife of your youth.

And it celebrates sexual joy within the context of exclusivity.

You and you alone are my husband, my wife, my love, my life, forever.

Mutual Respect is the Key

Proverbs 31:10-31

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 night;
she provides food for her family
and portions for her female servants.*

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 *Honour her for all that her hands have
done,
and let her works bring her praise at the
city gate.*

The third and final part of wisdom is what leads to a strong relationship between a man and woman before and after marriage.

Notice the parts of this famous passage about the "Wife of Noble Character:"

1. The man trusts her unequivocally.
2. The man himself is respectable - a leader at the gates among the wise.
3. The man praises her with superlatives in private.
4. The woman is praised among the leaders publicly.

This tells us in a very subtle way how this relationships works.

They both respected inside and outside their home.

This then is the bottom line.

A woman cannot and should not attend to a man

that does not respect her and she does not respect and vice versa.

Respect and honour form the relational bond between a man and woman.

It is when we despise one another that a relationship unravels.

Look to it.