

What are the best qualities of a wife? Is it her hair, clothes, makeup, or jewelry? Is it her charm and beauty? Actually, it is none of these things, for Proverbs 31 says,

Strength and dignity are her clothing... (verse 25).

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the LORD, she shall be praised (verse 30).

These verses are from a section of Scripture (Proverbs 31:10-31) that describes an excellent wife. It is a good study for women, but it is actually the record of a mother's teachings for her son (see Proverbs 31:1). This makes it an even better study for men so that they can recognize a godly woman. It begins with a question:

An excellent wife, who can find? For her worth is far above jewels (Proverbs 31:10).

Like a precious jewel that is quickly mined from the ground, an excellent wife is difficult for a man to find because such a woman is worth so much.

Because her worth is far above jewels, jewels cannot adorn her properly. Notice 1 Peter 3:1-6:

¹In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, ²as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. ³Your adornment must not be merely external – braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, or putting on dresses; ⁴but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God. ⁵For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, being submissive to their own husbands; ⁶just as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.

The "hidden person of the heart" adorns a godly woman externally by the deeds she does. This is evident in the "excellent wife" of Proverbs 31, who abounds in good works for her home and family, and by 1 Timothy 2:10, which says that her adornment should be "by means of good works, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness."

Submission to a husband is also part of a godly wife's adornment. Feminists are offended by this requirement of Scripture, but there is nothing offensive about it. They simply do not appreciate God's model of submission. Consider Ephesians 5:22-24:

²²Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

Building a God-Centered Home: God's Adornment for Wives

This model of submission is simply an order designed by God. It is not a system of value, for a wife is a "fellow heir of the grace of life" along with her husband (1 Peter 3:7). In fact, marriage is intended to be a blessing for the wife, for she is the recipient of her husband's Christ-like love, and she is a valuable treasure to be cherished.

These ideas may be old fashioned, but marriage itself is almost as old as the creation. The wisdom of God for husbands and wives has been proved over thousands of years, and we would be fools to tamper with it now.

"Choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).