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Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. –Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. –Joshua 22:5

Questions for Reflection or Discussion

Note: For each of the following questions, refer to the **Sermon Summary** inside.

Observation—*What do I see?*

- 1 Proverbs 31:1-9 is a mother's advice written to her son, Lemuel, who was an earthly king. How do the following passages make this advice relevant even to average folks such as us?
 - 1 Peter 2:9–10
 - 1 Timothy 6:2 and 6–10
 - Ephesians 5:17–18
 - Philippians 3:14–4:1
- 2 King Lemuel's mother warned against giving oneself to destructive relationships and pursuits (v. 3). What are some examples of destructive relationships or pursuits common in our world today?
- 3 Leaders also must avoid behaviors such as alcohol, drugs, or gambling which cloud judgment and corrupt responsibility. How have those behaviors impacted your extended family or circle of friends?

Interpretation—*What does it mean?*

- 4 What happens when sin appears harmless, and how does active participation in the church serve as a safeguard?
- 5 Give some concrete examples of what it means to live as an ambassador of hope.
- 6 What is the connection between intoxication/addiction and injustice?
- 7 How does advocating for justice reflect the character of Christ?

Application—*What do I do with this?*

- 8 What relationships or influences have most shaped your spiritual growth (positively or negatively)?
- 9 What habits or pursuits are most at risk of competing against God for your devotion?
- 10 What one step could you take to become even more involved in the ministry of your church?
- 11 Who do we know at TCC who may need someone to speak up or care for them?
What practical step could we take this week to serve them?

- ① 1 Peter 2:9–10 believers are “a royal priesthood”— “royal” reveals that we are kingly; “priesthood” reveals that we have a role of leading people to be reconciled to God.
1 Timothy 6:2 and 6–10 believers are to “teach and encourage” (ie, lead/influence) others to use our resources for the good of others.
Ephesians 5:17–18 we don’t need to “forget” our troubles because we cast our cares onto the Lord
We can point others to this greater hope that means we don’t need to live in this “escapism”
Philippians 3:14–4:1 believers have a heavenly citizenship and are to follow Paul’s example.
- ② Possible answers include: porn and filthy movies/music; sports gambling; flirting at the office; consumerism; travel sports; drunkenness and other self-indulgent diversions.
- ③ Be prepared with your own brief, concrete thoughts on this, but let group members go first.
- ④ Sin deceives people by hiding its destructive spiritual, emotional, relational, and moral consequences. Godly community provides accountability, contentment, encouragement, and obedience that help resist sinful desires.
- ⑤ It means finding hope and satisfaction in God rather than turning to worldly escapes or controlling addictions. Concrete examples deferring gratification in this life in order to grow spiritually and serve others; being faithful to your marriage vows; taking seriously your role of spiritual leadership, etc.
- ⑥ Enslaving behaviors impair discernment and prevent one from fulfilling responsibilities faithfully and justly.
- ⑦ Christ cared for the oppressed, poor, and neglected, so believers imitate Him by defending and serving others faithfully.
- ⑧ Be prepared with your own brief, concrete thoughts on this, but let group members go first.
- ⑨ Ditto.
- ⑩ Explore options here: <https://tcc.org/serve/>
- ⑪ Brainstorm the name of a single parent, an elderly person, or someone without family nearby.

Sermon Summary Proverbs 31:1-9

King Lemuel's mother called him to live with godly wisdom as one who belongs to the kingdom of God. Though addressed to a king, these principles apply to all believers because we influence others and serve as heirs with Christ and representatives of His kingdom. Living as heirs of the kingdom means reflecting Christlikeness through godly wisdom (Proverbs 31:1–9; 1 Peter 2:9–10).

1. Live in Active Community

We must guard the relationships and influences that shape our lives. Proverbs 31:3 warns against giving strength and energy to relationships and pursuits that lead to destruction. Forbidden relationships, self-indulgence, and corrupt companions weaken character and destroy wisdom. Sin often presents itself as harmless or without cost, yet it produces spiritual, emotional, relational, and moral consequences (Proverbs 31:3; Proverbs 6; Nehemiah 13:26; Proverbs 26:23–26).

We must also avoid giving excessive attention to flattering voices, selfish ambitions, and worldly pursuits that draw us away from faithfulness to God and responsibility toward others. The answer to self-indulgence is active participation in godly community marked by contentment, accountability, and obedience (1 Timothy 6:2; 1 Timothy 6:6–10).

2. Live as Ambassadors of Hope

Proverbs 31:4–7 warns leaders against intoxication and every form of enslavement that clouds judgment and corrupts responsibility. Alcohol, drugs, gambling, and similar vices impair discernment, distort priorities, and lead people away from justice and faithfulness. When we allow anything other than God to control us, we become unable to fulfill our responsibilities rightly.

These pursuits often arise from attempts to escape sorrow, dissatisfaction, anxiety, or despair. As believers, however, our hope is found in the Lord rather than in worldly escapes. We do not need to numb our burdens, but instead to entrust them to God and seek fullness through His Spirit. As ambassadors of Christ's kingdom, we must reflect the character and hope of the kingdom we represent (Proverbs 31:4–7; Ephesians 5:17–18).

3. Live as Advocates of Justice

Proverbs 31:8–9 teaches us to use our voices on behalf of the vulnerable, the oppressed, the poor, and those without influence. Godly leadership requires action, not merely awareness. Self-indulgence and worldly distraction dull compassion and hinder justice, but wisdom calls us to defend those who are overlooked and mistreated.

Advocating for justice requires proximity to those who suffer and willingness to speak even when doing so is uncomfortable. The church must hear the cries of the hurting and act faithfully on their behalf. This reflects the character of Christ, who cared for the oppressed, the poor, and the neglected. Christian maturity is demonstrated by imitating His example and pursuing heavenly citizenship rather than earthly indulgence (Proverbs 31:8–9; Micah 6:8; Philippians 3:14–4:1).

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

*The first seven chapters of Proverbs have many appeals to wisdom.
But now, wisdom personified makes her appeal to us! We do well to heed...*

Monday— Read Proverbs 8:1-5.

- Is Wisdom's call in a hushed whisper? (v. 1)
- Is Wisdom's call in an obscure place? (v. 2-3)
- To what sort of people does Wisdom call? (v. 4-5)
- Who is the initiator here? (v. 1-5)

Tuesday— Read Proverbs 8:6-11. Although Wisdom is "down to earth"—it is anything but worldly!

- What words are used in v. 6-8 to describe Wisdom's speech?
- Although Wisdom's words are not "twisted or crooked" (v. 8b), not everyone can profit from them. What qualities must we develop in order to understand and appreciate them? (v. 9)
- What attitude and what choice equips us to appreciate wisdom? (v. 10)
- **Why** should we develop the attitude necessary to profit from wisdom? (v. 11)

Wednesday— Read Proverbs 8:12-21.

- Who are Wisdom's "roommates"? (v. 12) With whom does Wisdom refuse to bunk? (v. 13)
- What does Wisdom give? (v. 14, 18-19)
- Is anyone beyond needing Wisdom? (v. 15-16)
- If you want to find Wisdom, where must you hang out? (v. 20)
- Does Wisdom give her blessings to mere casual acquaintances? (v. 17 & 21)

Thursday— Read Proverbs 8:22-31.

- Is Wisdom a late-comer to creation? (v. 22-29)
- If Wisdom was **before** "the beginning"—Genesis 1:1—is she a mere Creature?
- But Wisdom wasn't simply present—she was actively involved and emotionally engaged! (v. 30-31)
- What emotion predominates when Wisdom is involved?

Friday— Read Proverbs 8:32-36.

- If we are to share in Wisdom's joyous blessedness, what must we do? (v. 32-34)
- How do v. 34-35 describe the diligence we must have if we are to find Wisdom?
- How do you reconcile the fact that Wisdom is presented as all-but unavoidable (v. 1-4), and yet is only "found" by those who "watch daily at her doorposts"? (v. 34-35)
- When one rejects Wisdom, who's the ultimate loser? (v. 36)

Saturday— Reread Proverbs 8:1-36, and then trace this progress of the thought: Wisdom is...

- (a) the would-be guide of any man (v. 1-5)
- (b) the partner of morality (v. 6-13)
- (c) the key to all success (v. 14-21)
- (d) the very principle of creation (v. 22-31)
- (e) the one necessity of life (v. 32-36)