

# CROSS-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

Week #1

## 'BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE'

AS WE REMEMBER OUR SETTING IN WEEK ONE OF OUR SERIES, JESUS IS OUR PERFECT EXAMPLE OF WHAT IS EXCELLENT AND TRUTHFULLY LOVING. AND THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE, WE SEE EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE THAT LIVED OUT LIVES OF EXCELLENCE. HOWEVER, THE BOOKS OF RUTH AND PROVERBS OUTLINE TWO PEOPLE THAT LIVED OUT EXCELLENCE IN RELATIONSHIPS FOR US TO SEE IN A PRETTY DIRECT WAY. THOSE PEOPLE ARE RUTH AND BOAZ. BOAZ, A KINSMAN REDEEMER, WHO WAS FAITHFUL TO THE NEED AND CALL, EVEN AT GREAT COST. RUTH, A GENTILE WOMAN WHO WAS WIDOW TO A JEWISH HUSBAND, WAS LOYAL AT TO HER WIDOWED MOTHER-IN-LAW, LEAVING ALL HER PAST TO PRAISE GOD THROUGH FAITHFUL LIVING.

PROVERBS 31:10-31 BEGINS WITH A PHRASE REFERRING TO AN 'EXCELLENT WOMAN' THAT IS ONLY OBSERVED ONE OTHER PLACE IN SCRIPTURE, AND THAT IS RUTH 3:17 REGARDING RUTHER, HERSELF. AS SOLOMON RECOUNTS THE MAKE-UP OF AN EXCELLENT WOMAN, HE WRITES FOR MEN TO OBSERVE AND CHERISH THESE QUALITIES. TAKING A LOOK THROUGH THE TEXT WE OBSERVED '6 QUALITIES OF BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE'. HOWEVER, THESE QUALITIES ARE NOT MERELY FOR WOMEN, BUT TO BE SET AS AN EXAMPLE FOR THE FAMILY BY MEN.

BELOW ARE THOSE 6 QUALITIES OF BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE...

### QUALITIES OF BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE FROM PROVERBS 31:

- 1) TRUSTWORTHINESS (v.11)
- 2) WORKS WITH DELIGHT (v.12-19 & 27)
- 3) CONTENT WITH WHAT GOD GIVES (v.11-30 \*notice there are NO complaints)
- 4) COMPASSIONATE (v.20)
- 5) WISE TO THE SITUATION (v.21-26)
- 6) FEARS THE LORD (v.30)

IN THE COMING WEEKS WE WILL LOOK DEEPER INTO EACH OF THESE QUALITIES INDIVIDUALLY; HOWEVER, TAKE TIME TO REFLECT ON THESE SIX QUALITIES IN YOUR OWN LIFE AS A WHOLE. IF SOMEONE WHO KNOWS YOU WELL WAS HONEST, WOULD THEY DESCRIBE YOU WITH THESE QUALITIES? EACH PERSON IN EACH ROLE IN ANY RELATIONSHIP HAS A NEED FOR THESE QUALITIES IF THEY ARE TO LEAD GODLY AND EXCELLENT LIVES. NO PERSON IS WITH EXCUSE, YOUNG OR OLD, MARRIED OR SINGLE. HERE IS A LOOK AT A FEW THINGS TO CONSIDER IN SOME MORE PROMINENT ROLES WE KNOW. PLEASE LET THIS BE A CONVERSATION STARTER, AS NONE OF THE THOUGHTS OR QUESTIONS ARE EXHAUSTIVE... I AM PRAYING THAT THIS SERIES AND STUDY OF GOD'S WORD IS AS BENEFICIAL TO YOU AS IT HAS BEEN IN MY OWN LIFE.

# **CROSS-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS**

## **MEN:**

*MEN HAVE A DILEMMA ON THEIR HANDS IF THEY THINK PROVERBS 31 WAS JUST WRITTEN FOR THE WOMEN.. FIRST OFF, PROVERBS 31 IS RECORDED BY SOLOMON TO MEN SO THAT THEY MIGHT RECOGNIZE THE TYPE OF PRECIOUS JEWEL THEY HAVE AT HOME. CONSIDER THESE COUPLE VERSES IN WHAT GOD CALLS MEN TO IF THEIR LIVES ARE TO BE "EXCELLENT":*

*READ EPHESIANS 5:1-2 & 25-29..*

*IF MEN HAVE THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN THE HOME, THEN WHAT ARE SOME THINGS THAT DESCRIBE THE ACTIONS AND MINDSET OF THE MAN TOWARDS HIS OWN BRIDE? WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE MAN IN MARRIAGE AS IT REGARDS HIS WIFE?*

*READ DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 & PROVERBS 22:6..*

*MEN HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE RAISING UP OF THE ENTIRE HOUSEHOLD, INCLUDING THEIR CHILDREN. HOWEVER, MOST MEN TAKE A BACKSEAT TO THIS TASK. GOD CALLS MEN IN THESE TEXTS TO FIRST BE COMPLETELY OBSORBED IN HEART, SOUL, AND STRENGHT WITH GOD HIMSELF. BUT OUT OF THAT COMPLETE DESIRE FOR GOD, WHAT TYPE OF ACTIONS DO THESE PASSAGES CALL FOR MEN TO PRACTICE IN RAISING THEIR CHILDREN?*

*IS THERE A FEW AREAS WHERE YOU COULD SEE GOD STARTING TO USE YOU TO DIRECT YOUR CHILDREN IN THE SIX QUALITIES OF EXCELLENCE? WRITE OUT SOME OF YOUR THOUGHTS AND THEN TAKE THEM TO PRAYER.*

*LASTLY, IF LEADING A FAMILY IN THESE QUALITIES OF EXCELLENCE IS THE CALL, THEN TIME IN GOD'S WORD IS NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS. WHAT IS GOD CURRENTLY TEACHING YOU FROM HIS WORD?*

*\*IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHERE TO START, BUT YOU ARE WANTING TOO, GOD BUILT THE CHURCH TO BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT.. REACH OUT TO A MAN YOU TRUST AND SPIRITUALLY RESPECT TO HELP.*

# CROSS-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

## WOMEN:

PROVERBS 31 MAY HAVE BEEN WRITTEN TO MEN, BUT IT DOES NONETHELESS DESCRIBE THE MAKEUP OF AN EXCELLENT WOMAN. GOD ASSIGNED ROLES TO MEN THAT ARE NOT PRESENT FOR WOMEN, BUT ROLES FOR WOMEN THAT ARE NOT PRESENT FOR MEN. EACH HAS A VERY UNIQUE PURPOSE WITHIN GOD'S PLAN IF A HOME IS TO BE RAN WELL. OFTEN TIMES THE ROLE OF THE WOMAN IS OVERLOOKED OR DOWNPLAYED AS LESS IMPORTANT. HOWEVER, WHENEVER WE TAKE THE TIME TO LOOK THROUGH THE MAKEUP OF AN EXCELLENT WOMAN FROM SCRIPTURE, WE FIND A WOMAN THAT IS HIGHLY DESIRABLE. FOR THIS REASON, GOD'S WORD SAYS SHE IS TO BE CELEBRATED (PROV. 31:30-31). THE PROBLEM IS THAT MEN OFTEN DO NOT GIVE THE APPLAUSE THEY OUGHT TO FOR SUCH A WOMAN..

IN PROVERBS 31:10-31 WE DON'T EVER SEE THAT THE MAN DOES PRAISE THE WOMAN. YET WE SEE THE WOMAN CONTINUE ON WITH THE VIRTUOUS WORK GOD HAS PUT IN FRONT OF HER WITH ALL THE QUALITIES OF EXCELLENCE. IS BEING AN EXCELLENT WOMAN SOMETHING THAT IS DESIREABLE TO YOU EVEN IF ONLY GOD WAS THE ONE TO NOTICE?

READ 1 PETER 3:1-5..

SITUATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES MAY NOT BE PERFECT, AND OFTEN ARE NOT IN MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIPS. WHAT DO THESE VERSES REMIND WOMEN OF, EVEN IF THE HUSBAND MAY NOT BE LEADING WELL?

READ TITUS 2:3-5..

GENERATIONALLY SPEAKING, WOMEN ARE TO BE BUILT UP IN BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE. IS THERE ANY AREA WITHIN THE HUSBANDS PLAN FOR THE FAMILY THAT YOU ARE ACTIVELY ENCOURAGING CHRIST-LIKENESS (BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE) AMONG THE CHILDREN?

READ GALATIANS 6:9 & COLOSSIANS 3:23-24..

A WOMAN'S ROLE CAN OFTEN BE UNRECOGNIZED AND BECOME VERY LONELY. DO NOT BE DISCOURAGED IN PURSUING BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE IN YOUR LIFE AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD. YOUR DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT IN GOD'S WORD IS NECESSARY IF ANY OF THESE THINGS ARE TO HAPPEN. WHAT ARE THESE PASSAGES CALLING YOU TO REMEMBER?

\*IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHERE TO START, BUT YOU ARE WANTING TOO, GOD BUILT THE CHURCH TO BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT.. REACH OUT TO A WOMAN YOU TRUST AND SPIRITUALLY RESPECT TO HELP.

# CROSS-CENTERED RELATIONSHIPS

## YOUNG PEOPLE:

THE BUILDING OF THIS MATERIAL WAS DONE WITH MY DAUGHTERS IN MIND FIRST. IF A YOUNG PERSON IS TO GROW INTO A SOLID, FIRM-STANDING, BIBLICALLY EXCELLENT CHRISTIAN, GOD HAS CHOSEN TO USE THE FATHER, MOTHER, AND LOCAL CHURCH AS THE TEACHERS OF HIS TRUTH. THE TEXTBOOK IS HIS WORD, THE BIBLE. THIS WORLD IS FIGHTING FOR YOUR MIND AND HEART, AND IT IS NO WONDER DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY AMONG YOUTH ARE GROSSLY AND RAPIDLY GROWING IN AMERICA. WITHOUT A GODLY EXAMPLE OF RELATIONSHIP FOR A CHILD TO LOOK AT, CHILDREN ARE GROWING MORE AND MORE DEEPLY BROKEN. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT A PERSON OF BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE IS NOT FULL OF DEPRESSION AND ANXIOUSNESS... BUT RATHER LOVE, JOY, PEACE, PATIENCE, KINDNESS, GOODNESS, FAITHFULNESS, GENTLENESS, AND SELF-CONTROL (GAL. 5:22-23). YOU YOUNG PEOPLE CAN BE GLAD THAT GODLY TRAINING IS LAID OUT CLEARLY IN SCRIPTURE IF YOU ARE WILLING TO OPEN IT AND SEE THE WONDERFUL ANSWERS GOD GIVES TO ALL OF LIFE'S DIFFICULTIES.

PROVERBS CONSTANTLY REFERS TO THE NEXT GENERATION BY SAYING THINGS LIKE "LISTEN, MY SON (CHILD)..." A PHRASE THAT HAPPENS NEAR 30 TIMES THROUGHOUT THE BOOK. 18 OF THOSE COME IN THE FIRST 7 CHAPTERS. MOST OF THE LESSONS IN PROVERBS ARE POINTS OF WISDOM IN REGARD TO RELATIONSHIPS WITH FRIENDS AND OPPOSITE-SEX RELATIONS (INCLUDING DATING, POTENTIAL MARRIAGE, AND BEFRIENDING).

READ PROVERBS 1:8-33..

SOLOMON IS WRITING AS A FATHER... WHAT POSITION SHOULD A CHILD BE IN SO THAT THEY CAN LEARN?

HOW DOES SOLOMON DESCRIBE THE FOOL CHILD IN THESE VERSES?

IN VERSE 33 SOLOMON DESCRIBES THE VALUE TO A CHILD WHO DECIDES TO LISTEN, LEARN, AND LIVE A LIFE OF BIBLICAL EXCELLENCE... WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS?

IF ANY CHILD IS GOING TO GROW INTO A BIBLICALLY EXCELLENT PERSON, THEY MUST FIRST FIND THEMSELVES WILLING TO LEARN. IF THE TEXTBOOK FOR THE CLASS IS GOD'S WORD, THEN WHAT IS IT THAT HE HAS BEEN TEACHING YOU LATELY?

\*IF YOU ARE NOT SURE WHERE TO START, BUT YOU ARE WANTING TOO, GOD BUILT THE CHURCH TO BE AN ENCOURAGEMENT... I ENCOURAGE YOU TO FIRST TALK TO YOUR MOTHER OR FATHER, BUT KNOW THAT THE CHURCH IS FULL OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO WOULD LOVE TO HELP AND ENCOURAGE YOU... JUST ASK.