

The Incredible Worth of a Woman

I. A PROPHETIC WORD

- A. One emphasis of the Spirit is to restore honor to women in the kingdom. In my opinion, women have been the largest, most diligent, and effective work force in the kingdom throughout history, and mothers are the most successful in making disciples. One of Satan’s main strategies has been to destroy women and minimize the value and effectiveness of womanhood and motherhood. Jesus is raising up His people who resist this demonic strategy. Jesus is restoring honor to women in the home, the Church, and in workplaces that are built on kingdom principles.
- B. On November 26, 1995, I woke up suddenly at 3:00am with a prophetic sentence, as if an arrow from the Lord had struck my heart. I woke up prophesying, ***“The incredible worth of a woman who can fully understand it?”*** I knew the Lord was speaking through me and to me. This word was applied first to the corporate church and then to women individually. The Lord was challenging me to grow in understanding on this and calling me to challenge others to grow in it.
- C. There is a virtuous woman being raised up in the earth, called the Body of Christ. We see her brokenness and often feel critical of her. She is stumbling, but the Lord fully understands her incredible worth to Him. Jesus views His Church so differently than most. The way Jesus sees His Bride is the biblical model for how we are to view His people in the Church.
- D. The question is asked about who can find a virtuous wife. Another related question is, who can fully see the virtue in his wife? We can easily miss the virtue that is right before us. The Lord sees the budding virtues in His wife, the Bride of Christ. He sees her worth to Him. He wants us to see what He sees in the Church and also wants men to see the budding virtues in their wife.
¹⁰***Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies. (Prov. 31:10)***
- E. The Lord wants us to see and evaluate His people like He does. His ways are very different. He looks at the intention of the heart and sees the budding virtues that are just beginning to grow. However, man focuses on the outward appearance, achievements, and performance of others.
⁷***For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance [achievements], but the LORD looks at the heart. (1 Sam. 16:7)***
- F. We must regard or evaluate our spouse, children, and friends by who they are in the Spirit, or in God’s eyes, instead of only seeing them according to their fleshly weakness and limitations.
¹⁶***From now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. (2 Cor. 5:16)***
- G. As we understand how the Lord views His Church and people, we view them differently. When we see how the Lord views His people, then we see ourselves very differently. He wants us to apply this to our relationships—particularly in our families, starting with our spouse.
⁵***Judge nothing...until the Lord comes, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one’s praise will come from God. (1 Cor. 4:5)***

- H. Jesus motivates His people to obedience with warnings, promises, and the power of cherishing. He knows that the power of cherishing His Bride is the most effective way to transform her. The revelation of Jesus cherishing His Church greatly affects our view of Jesus, His glory, the dignity of the Church, our approach to holiness, marriage, child-raising, and all our other relationships.
- ²⁷ *...that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle [compromise]...²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. (Eph. 5:27-29)*
- I. In this end-time prophecy, Paul reveals that Jesus will have a people in the nations, who will live without compromise before He returns. The Church will become glorious as she receives the revelation of being cherished by Jesus. Cherishing is His primary mode of changing His people.
- J. Jesus cherishes His Bride by naming her according to the budding virtues that are just beginning to grow in her heart. Jesus sees the cry or longing in our spirit to be dedicated to Him—long before we walk it out in a mature way. There are many examples of this in the Scripture.
1. When the Midianite armies invaded Israel, Gideon hid in fear. An angel appeared to him and called him Gideon, mighty man of valor (Judg. 6). He did not feel like a mighty man of valor. The Lord saw courage and leadership in Gideon that he was not aware of.
- ¹²*The Angel...said to him, "The LORD is with you, you mighty man of valor!"...¹⁵ He said to Him, "O my Lord, how can I save Israel?...I am the least in my father's house." (Judg. 6:12-15)*
2. Jesus gave Simon a new name, calling him Peter (Mt. 16:18). Peter (in Greek, *petros*) means *the rock*. This new name emphasized Peter's stability in leadership. Jesus gave this name to him knowing that he would fail in leadership, as when he denied the Lord (Mt. 26:75) and yielded to the fear of man when visiting Antioch (Gal. 2:11-14).
- K. God calls those things which do not exist as though they did (Rom. 4:17). He does this with the budding virtues in our heart. He calls them forth when He sees their early development in our spirit, long before they exist or are openly seen by others. This is the way that Jesus leads the Body of Christ. He calls things forth before they exist in fullness before the eyes of man.
- ¹⁷*God...calls those things which do not exist as though they did... (Rom. 4:17)*
- L. Jesus sees the early stages of our longings to be obedient to Him. He values it. This is Jesus' approach to changing His Bride. It is God-like to see virtue in others that they cannot see.
- M. Encouragement is putting courage in the heart of others by speaking affirming truths about them. Encouragement is the opposite of the spirit of accusation that Satan uses (Rev. 12:10). It is not enough to just think affirming truths about people; we must speak them out, because the Devil obscures the truths of our value to wear us down with accusation, so that we give up.
- ¹³*Encourage one another daily...that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. (Heb. 3:13, NIV)*

II. THE POWER OF HONORING AND CHERISHING

- A. Jesus cherishes the Church as the model for how a man is to cherish his wife. This is how the Lord wants husbands to relate to their wives. Our homes are to be a stronghold of honor. This happens as men take the lead to bless the budding virtues in their families.
- B. We will honor others out of the overflow of honor that we receive freely from God. In this way, we are to be salt and light to unbelievers, when our families are strongholds of honor. This flows over to all our other relationships.
- C. Jesus wants a man to think about and lead his wife in the way that He thinks about and leads His wife. A man's stewardship is to partner with Jesus in bringing forth his wife and family in virtue, worth, and honor. God wants men to be spokesmen for what is in His heart for them. The Lord will speak grace to our wives and children often through our lips, as we affirm them while they are growing. God wants our wives to hear His voice of honor through our lips. This is intrinsic to the ministry of being a husband. Ask the Lord to show you how He sees your wife and children.
- D. Jesus ordained marriage as the way in which a woman is to be cherished as He cherishes the Church. Husbands are to imitate Jesus' leadership style in their homes. One way of doing this is by taking the lead in humbling ourselves in bringing reconciliation in times of conflict. If we appeal to Scripture to demand that our wife "*submit*," then we are operating in a wrong spirit.
- E. Even in times of giving correction, we can speak in a spirit of grace with affirmation and affection. We can talk honestly about weaknesses with a spirit of grace and without a spirit of accusation. The Bible has many examples of God speaking negative things with a spirit of grace, offering hope with kindness in a positive tone. We must guard against allowing the spirit of accusation to get into our family dynamics. It operates in many Christian marriages and destroys their home life. The husband is the most responsible to make sure that this does not happen. Many use a motivation of shame to stir up their children. This is the wrong way to raise children.

III. PRACTICAL WAYS TO HONOR OUR WIFE

⁷Husbands...dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered. (1 Pet. 3:7)

- A. Scripture calls men to understand and honor their wife as equal partners, or heirs, in the kingdom. Growing in prayer is linked to honoring wives. The end-time prayer movement is a movement that honors women. Men are to commit to understand and honor their wife even if their romantic feelings are gone. Any man who fails to do this will be hindered in his prayer life.
- B. A man honors his wife by gaining insight into how God sees her, to what her destiny is, and how God fashioned her heart. God has fashioned the heart of every individual in a unique way. The Spirit wants to give a man insight into the secret of who his wife is to Jesus and how her heart is fashioned. We must ask Him for insight into her destiny, and how she thinks and processes life.

- C. **Commitment #1:** To honor her verbally. Seek to understand and verbalize the budding virtues in her life that she may lose sight of, instead of only speaking of her deficiencies and weakness. I recommend a 10-to-1 ratio of affirmation to correction in marriage and parenting relationships. Gaining this balance takes time, energy and focus. We must ask our wife and the Lord for insight into her heart. Ask Jesus to show you how He views your wife and to see the truth of who she is. A man is to partner with Jesus in calling his wife forth into God’s fullness for her life. She is to regularly hear the Lord’s voice of honor and affirmation through the lips of her husband.
- D. **Commitment #2:** To honor her with action. Honor her choices in the domestic areas of your life together. My goal has been to never say no to my wife on domestic issues, such as doing a task, running an errand, how we spend time together, and where we go out socially, etc.
- E. **Commitment #3:** To verbalize the value of her ministry. This can be in the home (dignity of motherhood) or outside the home (in the church, community service, or workplace, etc.).
- F. **Commitment #4:** To be the first to humble ourselves in a conflict. This is the responsibility of headship. Wait to solve conflicts until you both have a happy spirit (instead of a troubled spirit).
- G. **Commitment #5:** To lead her spiritually. Our lifestyle choices can help us cultivate passion for Jesus. One of the greatest gifts we can give our wife is to cultivate spiritual depth in our own life.
- H. **Commitment #6:** To commit to not relate to another woman that she feels uncomfortable with for any reason (her discernment or jealousy, etc.). Jealousy, like fear, is very painful and does not “just go away” by resisting it. It is replaced by your words and actions that help her confidence to grow. Lead her in a way that draws forth her highest potential for security.
- I. **Commitment #7:** To contend for her honor. This is done in every way possible, especially by teaching our children to honor her by their words and actions. It is a husband’s responsibility to contend for his wife’s honor in the home. He ensures that she never has to fight for her own honor. If our wife must raise her voice to make the children obey, then our job is not done.
- J. A woman is clothed with honor by doing honorable acts and by being honored by her husband and children. Do you clothe your wife with honor in your home?
²⁵Strength and honor are her clothing...²⁸Her children rise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her... (Prov. 31:25, 28)
- K. Many men assume that they are already walking in most of these principles. So occasionally ask your wife for input on how you can improve in these areas. Some women will most effectively respond to this by writing their answers (some even use email for this).