

# Sermon followed by Service

September 26, 2021

Proverbs 31:10-31

No, it's not Mother's Day. And, no, I didn't lose a bet to my wife; I'm not in trouble with my wife; I'm not trying to dig myself out of a hole. If they - my mom and my wife - were counters and judgers, I'd be in too deep a hole, I'd be too deep in too many holes to ever get myself out. No, at Pastor Conference, this section of Proverbs just struck me as too beautiful, too important a section to just mention here or there, now and then.

*What do you find to be beautiful or important in this section of Scripture?*

We live in a world confused and misinformed about sex and gender, confused and misinformed about man and woman, male and female; confused and misinformed about strength and beauty; confused and misinformed about success. I could say we live in a world that doesn't appreciate manhood, especially Christian manhood. Even more so I could say that we live in a world that doesn't appreciate women, especially godly and Christian women. And it's not just the world out there that is confused and misinformed, not just the world out there that doesn't give women, especially godly women, the appreciation that God has for them.

For example, if I were to say and ask you: "Think about what Proverbs says about women. What's the first thing that comes to mind?" Would it be our lesson or "A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day"? Our lesson or "Better to live on a corner of the roof than share a house with a quarrelsome wife"? Which do we find easier to see and remember? Which do we find easier to tell others - How wonderful the women are that God has put in our lives? Or our gripe, our grumble, our growl against them? So let's clear the muck out of our hearts and minds and eyes and see the treasure God gives his world in good and godly women.

So what do we see in our lesson? A model. Not a swimsuit model or a fashion model or a hands model with soft, smooth skin. No, our model is modeling something deeper than the skin, something more beautiful than skin. Our model is modeling a heart and mind filled with the heart and mind of God. She is modeling hands working the work of God. As we see her pictures, as we see her "show her stuff," we see the heart and mind, the love and the life of God himself. We see a model of what God wants for us, a model of what God wants us to be. We see what to look for; we see what to be. We see God's heart and mind; we see God's life and love.

*In what ways does this model show us God's heart, mind, life, and love?*

There's also something we don't see here. Pictures and scenes cut out from the album, left out of the portfolio; pictures and scenes erased, deleted, forgotten. Pictures and scenes, cut out, left out, erased, deleted, forgotten, why? Because they don't measure up. Something else we don't see is how the pictures have been airbrushed; we don't see the make-up on the model's warts and birthmarks. We know there has to be some of that. We know that there have to be pictures and scenes left out because we see those pictures and scenes that don't make the cut here on other pages of the Bible with Adam and Eve, David and Bathsheba, Mary and Martha, and in our own lives. We know there has to be some airbrushing and make-up because no one looks so picture perfect, not in the Bible, not in our own lives; no one looks so picture-perfect except for Jesus.

Does that mean that the picture in our lesson is a fake? No, the picture, the word-painting in our lesson is a faithful rendition of how God sees his model woman. The picture, the word-painting in our lesson is a faithful rendition of how God sees you with Jesus. We have birthmarks and warts that we don't want seen. Not just the skin kind, but warts and birthmarks on our heart, warts and birthmarks in our personality, marks and scars of ugly evil. We have pictures and scenes from our lives that we don't want seen; pictures and scenes that we want cut out, left out, erased, deleted, forgotten. Not just because they would embarrass us, but because they would damn us. We all have pictures and scenes from our past that if they were part of our present, they would disqualify us from God's family picture. We all have pictures and scenes from our past that we don't want to have to answer for or explain. We all have pictures and scenes from our past that we can't make right or pay for.

But Jesus did. He took those pictures and scenes as his own. He didn't just try to hide them, deny them, make excuses for them. No, he took them and all the guilt and shame associated with them. He took our guilt and red-faced shame to the cross, and there before God and the world he answered for it. Not with lies and excuses or "explanations," but with his life and death, his body and blood. Now, with Jesus, before God, those pictures and scenes that would damn us are cut out, left out, erased, deleted, forgotten. You are forgiven. And the marks and scars of our evil? Covered over with the perfect life of Jesus. In your baptism, you are washed and covered over with a picture of Jesus. Even better, in baptism you are

washed and covered over with Jesus himself. Now, with Jesus, God sees you as picture perfect. He sees you as his model child, his model wife; he sees you right for his family, right for his home in heaven, and right to represent him here in this world like the model in our lesson.

How does the model in our lesson represent God? Not just with an outer show, putting on a good show; the model in our lesson isn't stuck on looks. She has something more important going on than just putting on a show and looking good. She has her eye and her heart on the LORD. With her eye and her heart on the LORD, she is strong. She isn't lazy; she isn't looking to be served as a princess. No, she puts her whole self into doing, doing for others. She has a strong body and she puts it to work; she has a strong mind and she finds ways to do for others. She's strong, but she isn't just mind and muscle strong; with her heart and her eye on the Lord, she has a strong spirit. Not bully strong, not pushy strong, not "my way or the highway, get it right or else" strong, but strong and wise in a way that shows and shares kindness. Not strong for self, to get for self. But strong to serve, making sure her family is taken care of, even making sure strangers are taken care of.

Did you notice how serving and serving others is at the center of this picture? As a wife, she serves her husband; as a mother, she serves her children; as a woman, she sees what people need, she sees what she can do, and - with her heart and mind, with her strength and soul - she reaches out and she does.

*Does this model remind you of anybody?*

Does she remind you of anybody? Perhaps a mom, a grandma, a dear sister at church? Or perhaps she reminds you of Jesus. That's right, perhaps she reminds you of Jesus - seeing what needs to be done, serving, sacrificing, doing what needs to be done - like Jesus.

"Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate." Amen.

# St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

*A Family Connecting in Christ*



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## DIVINE SERVICE II

**IN OUR WORLD TODAY ...** we live in a world confused over sex and gender, man and woman.

**IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ...** we won't clear all the confusion. We will, however, rejoice in the love God shows by blessing his families, his church, and his world with godly women!

### OPENING HYMN

*"God of Grace and God of Glory"*  
Hymn 523

God of grace and God of glory,  
On your people pour your pow'r;  
Crown your ancient Church's story;  
Bring its bud to glorious flow'r.  
Grant us wisdom; grant us courage  
For the facing of this hour,  
For the facing of this hour.

Lo, the hosts of evil round us  
Scorn the Christ, assail his ways.  
From our fears that long have bound us,  
Free our hearts to faith and praise.  
Grant us wisdom; grant us courage  
For the living of these days,  
For the living of these days.

Cure your children's warring madness;  
Bend our pride to your control;  
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness,  
Rich in things and poor in soul.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage  
Lest we miss your kingdom's goal,  
Lest we miss your kingdom's goal.

Save us from weak resignation  
To the evils we deplore;  
Let the gift of your salvation  
Be our glory evermore.  
Grant us wisdom, grant us courage,  
Serving you whom we adore,  
Serving you whom we adore.

## CHRISTIAN WORSHIP- PAGE 12 (SATURDAY SERVICE)

### +THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM+ Katarina Assimakopoulos

#### INVOCATION

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
C: **Amen.**

#### CONFESSION

M: Dear friends, let us approach God with a true heart and confess our sins, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to forgive us.  
C: **Lord of life, I confess that I am by nature dead in sin.  
For faithless worrying and selfish pride,  
For sins of habit and sins of choice,  
For the evil I have done and the good I have failed to do,  
I deserve to be cast away from your presence forever.  
O Lord, I am sorry for my sins. Forgive me, for Jesus' sake.**

#### ABSOLUTION

M: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. In his great mercy, God made us alive in Christ even when we were dead in our sins. Hear the word of Christ through his called servant: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.  
C: **Amen.**

## **LORD, HAVE MERCY (*Kyrie*)**

M: In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

For the well-being of all people everywhere, that they may receive from you all they need to sustain body and life, hear our prayer, O Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

M: For the spread of your life-giving gospel throughout the world, that all who are lost in sin may be brought to faith in you, hear our prayer, O Christ.

**C: Christ, have mercy.**

M: For patience and perseverance in this life, that we may not lose the hope of heaven as we await your return, hear our prayer, O Lord.

**C: Lord, have mercy.**

M: Lord of life, live in us that we may live for you.

**C: Amen.**

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Almighty God and Father, you created man and woman to be wonderful fits for each other. In this world of hurt and heartache, confusion and misinformation, bless us to hold to your Truth, appreciate your Plan, and to treat the women you bring into our lives with love and respect; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## **OLD TESTAMENT LESSON**

**Genesis 2:18-25**

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

The man said,

“This is now bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
she shall be called ‘woman,’  
for she was taken out of man.”

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.



PSALM 89 (CW)

*Refrain*

At the works of your hands, O Lord, I  
lift up my voice in song; I sing for joy.

*Psalm tone*

\*

I will sing of the LORD'S great love for`ever;\*  
I will make your faithfulness known through all gener`ations.

I will declare that your love stands firm for`ever,\*  
that you established your faithfulness in heav`en itself.

The heavens praise your won`ders, O LORD,\*  
your faithfulness too, in the assembly of the `holy ones. *Refrain*

O LORD God Almighty, who `is like you?\*  
You are mighty, O LORD, and your faithfulness sur`rounds you.

Blessed are those who have learned to ac`claim you,\*  
who walk in the light of your pre`sence, O LORD.

They rejoice in your name `all day long;\*  
they exult in your `righteousness.

**Glory be to the Father and `to the Son\*  
and to the Holy `Spirit,  
As it was in the be`ginning,\*  
is now, and will be forever. `Amen.**

*Refrain*

**EPISTLE LESSON****1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:25-27**

Now I want you to realize that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man, and the head of Christ is God.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

**VERSE OF THE DAY**

“Alleluia. Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;  
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.  
Give her the reward she has earned,  
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate. Alleluia.”  
(Proverbs 31:30-31)

**GOSPEL LESSON****Matthew 10:16-39**

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. “Teacher,” they said, “we want you to do for us whatever we ask.”

“What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

They replied, “Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory.”

“You don’t know what you are asking,” Jesus said. “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?”

“We can,” they answered.

Jesus said to them, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

#### **APOSTLES' CREED**

**I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell.**

**The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

#### **HYMN**

*"Love Is the Gracious Gift"*

**Hymn 505**

Love is the gracious gift of your goodness;  
Love is the patient fruit of your care;  
Love is the gentle work of your Spirit,  
Who is the source of love ev'rywhere.

You loved me first, Lord, sending me Jesus.  
Then I responded, trusting your Son.  
Now you invite me to love my neighbor,  
Showing your true love to ev'ryone.

Love means forgiveness, patience, and kindness;  
Love is not jealous, boastful, or rude.  
Love endures all things, bearing, believing;  
Love hope forever, rejoices in truth.

Love in a marriage, love freely given,  
Love of a husband, love of a wife —  
Made to continue, blossom, and flourish,  
Grow ever deeper throughout this life.

Love among Christians, love in the fam'ly,  
Love for the Savior, whose blood was shed,  
Love and submission one to another  
As unto Christ, who reigns as our head.

#### SERMON

#### Proverbs 31:10-31

A wife of noble character who can find?  
She is worth far more than rubies.  
Her husband has full confidence in her  
and lacks nothing of value.  
She brings him good, not harm,  
all the days of her life.  
She selects wool and flax  
and works with eager hands.  
She is like the merchant ships,  
bringing her food from afar.  
She gets up while it is still dark;  
she provides food for her family  
and portions for her servant girls.  
She considers a field and buys it;  
out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.  
She sets about her work vigorously;  
her arms are strong for her tasks.

She sees that her trading is profitable,  
and her lamp does not go out at night.  
In her hand she holds the distaff  
and grasps the spindle with her fingers.  
She opens her arms to the poor  
and extends her hands to the needy.  
When it snows, she has no fear for her household;  
for all of them are clothed in scarlet.  
She makes coverings for her bed;  
she is clothed in fine linen and purple.  
Her husband is respected at the city gate,  
where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.  
She makes linen garments and sells them,  
and supplies the merchants with sashes.  
She is clothed with strength and dignity;  
she can laugh at the days to come.  
She speaks with wisdom,  
and faithful instruction is on her tongue.  
She watches over the affairs of her household  
and does not eat the bread of idleness.  
Her children arise and call her blessed;  
her husband also, and he praises her:  
“Many women do noble things,  
but you surpass them all.”  
Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;  
but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.  
Give her the reward she has earned,  
and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.

HYMN

*"Son of God, Eternal Savior"*

Hymn 492

Son of God, eternal Savior, Source of life and truth and grace,  
Word made flesh, whose birth among us, Honors all our human race,  
You our head, who, throned in glory, For your own will ever plead:  
Fill us with your love and pity; Heal our wrongs and help our need.

Come, O Christ, and reign among us, King of love and Prince of Peace;  
Hush the storm of strife and passion; Bid its cruel discords cease.  
By your patient years of toiling, By your silent hours of pain,  
Quench our fevered thirst for pleasure; Stem our selfish greed for gain.

Bind us all as one together In your Church's sacred fold,  
Weak and healthy, poor and wealthy, Sad and joyful, young and old.  
Is there want or pain or sorrow? Make us all the burden share.  
Are there spirits crushed and broken? Teach us, Lord, to soothe their care.

As you, Lord, have lived for others, So may we for others live.  
Freely have your gifts been granted; Freely may your servants give.  
Yours the gold and yours the silver, Yours the wealth of land and sea;  
We but stewards of your bounty Held in solemn trust will be.

PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

## BLESSING

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. Amen.

## CLOSING HYMN

*“Children of the Heavenly Father”*

Hymn 449

Children of the heav’nly Father Safely in His bosom gather;  
Nestling bird nor star in Heaven Such a refuge ne’er was given.

God, His own doth tend and nourish; In His holy courts they flourish.  
From all evil things He spares them; In His mighty arms He bears them.

Neither life nor death shall ever From the Lord, his children sever;  
Unto them his grace he showeth, And their sorrows all he knoweth.

Though he giveth or he taketh, God his children ne’er forsaketh;  
His the loving purpose solely To preserve them, pure and holy.

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