

Brave

WEEK 1 • GROUP GUIDE • MESSAGE BY CHAD BRUEGMAN
PROVERBS 31 WOMAN

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

Think back to your high school days, what is the bravest thing you remember doing?

SHARE

Welcome to our new teaching series called “Brave.”

We are going to take a serious look at what biblical and boundless bravery looks like. All of us face challenges, some feel small and others feel like they are insurmountable. Each one of us needs strength and courage to be able to face those head on.

In this series, we are going to look at some of the bravest exploits that we find in the scriptures. And what makes this series so unique is that we will look at the brave exploits of women in the Bible and what we all can learn from them.

This series will not only strengthen and chisel the hearts of women, but it will challenge men to see rightly what a godly woman looks like in today’s seemingly confusing world of what defines a woman. She is defined by what God says about her and not the mere opinions of those around her or the never-ending pop psychology found in fashion magazines. As we delve into the lives of brave women in the scriptures, we all will be challenged to better understand who God made us to be. Men will need to rise up to become the men God calls them to be to encourage, support, sacrifice and lift up women around them; whether friends, co-workers, sisters, mothers, girlfriends or wives. When both men and women know what God called them to be, both thrive in their gifts and glorify God.

Fearless, dignified, noble, strong and brave. These are qualities you will find in a godly woman, who have a ferocious inner beauty that reflects the goodness of God. Let this series challenge you in what it means to be...brave.

Let’s read Proverbs 31:1-7

Matthew Henry’s Commentary on the Whole Bible states:

Most interpreters are of opinion that Lemuel is Solomon; the name signifies one that is for God, or devoted to God; and so it agrees well enough with that honourable name which, by divine appointment, was given to Solomon (2 Sa. 12:25), Jedediah—beloved of the Lord. Lemuel is supposed to be a pretty, fond, endearing name, by which his mother used to call him; and so much did he value himself upon the interest he had in his mother's affections that he was not ashamed to call himself by it.

In this week's message, Chad spoke about the powerful wisdom and counsel of King Solomon's mother. According to 1 Kings 2:19, it was a practice of Solomon, the king, to give great honor to his mother, "then he had a throne set for the king's mother, and she sat on his right." You could imagine this scene as she speaks bravely and boldly to the ruling King about what it means to be a godly man and from her vast experience, speaks from the heart on what a truly godly woman looks like.

She starts by reminding him of where he came from, that she was praying for him before he was born. Why do you think this wise mother started here before giving him advice?

She boldly warns the king not to spend his strength and vigor on "women," which ruins good kings. Notice she does not say woman or wife here, what do you think she was saying here and what wisdom can men take from this today?

GROW

The king listened intently to his mother's words about the importance of being responsible, not abusing power or drink. She warned him to not use God-granted position to oppress, but to protect and lift up the God-given rights of others.

Godly men are to be sober-minded, reliable; and defenders willing to sacrifice and serve to see others flourish around them. After the king's mother set him straight on what matters, she then shifted gears and spoke about what a true godly, noble and brave woman looks like.

Let's read Proverbs 31:8-31

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible highlights that:

She has the comfort and satisfaction of her virtue in her own mind (v. 25): Strength and honour are her clothing, in which she wraps herself, that is, enjoys herself, and in which she appears to the world, and so recommends herself. She enjoys a firmness and constancy of mind, has spirit to bear up under the many crosses and disappointments which even the wise and virtuous must expect to meet with in this world; and this is her clothing, for defence as well as decency. She deals honourably with all, and she has the pleasure of doing so, and shall rejoice in time to come; she shall reflect upon it with comfort, when she comes to be old, that she was not idle or useless when she was young. In the day of death it will be a pleasure to her to think that she has lived to some good purpose. Nay, she shall rejoice in an eternity to come; she shall be recompensed for her goodness with fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

In verse 25, God tells us that her clothing is "strength and dignity" and that a brave and noble woman can "laugh at the days to come." What makes this woman able to be fearless?

Why do you think the king's mother brings up women and clothing?

The king's mother tells the king that surface "beauty is fleeting." The important thing is to find a woman who fears the LORD, because you won't be able to stop praising her.

How would it change the culture around us if men and women pursued the truths found in this Proverb?

In verse 23, we read that "her husband is respected at the city gate." Chad mentioned that men won't find this type of spirit in a woman if they don't possess the spirit of these qualities as a man. What does it mean to share the same interest and spirit in relation to this passage?

How would applying these truths change relationships such as friendships, dating, marriage?

MOVE

Godly relationships require endless amounts of bravery.

God is calling each one of us to live without fear and surrender our weaknesses in exchange for his strength. In this, we are strong and brave, able to face the world with confidence. ... which leads to a very important point that Chad made in this week's message that this Proverbs 31 woman doesn't exist. In fact, no woman can live up to all of this. The king's mother was laying out for the king what a true and brave woman should be defined by. One way women today can be brave is to let go of the destructive pursuit of perfection by comparing themselves to others and lay down that burden at the cross. Proverbs 31 should bring comfort and help us realize what is really worthy to be praised and what is not. It helps us realize that we all fall short, but God's grace is bigger. A Proverbs 31 spirit is a celebration of God's original intent for a woman, one that is full of grace, noble, brave, and lives without fear, without comparison; knowing that God has made her beautiful.

In today's comparison culture, what daily practices can women put into practice to not feed the comparison monster?

What actual tangible practices can men do to help lift up, serve, encourage women around them and not contribute to the comparison and perfection issues women already face in today's culture?

What is the one thing this week you are going to try to apply after talking about what bravery looks like?

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

TO GO

Proverbs 31:30

Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised.