

(Malcolm Day) May 13, 73 A.M.

THE IDEAL MOTHER

Proverbs 31:29

"Thou excellest them all".

In Russia, at the summer homes of Czars there are most attractive and beautiful surroundings. With fountains and gardens. In one of the chambers of the palace the walls and the ceilings have been completely covered with portraits of beautiful women. Favorites of the Czars, who live there.

But in the Bible, we have the greatest portrait gallery in the world. In fact, in the Old Testament, we have a most notable picture of ideal women -- Ruth, Esther, Martha. In the New Testament, Mary, Rebecca, Rachel. And throughout the Bible runs countless names.

Fortunately we have the ideal woman, the ideal mother. And as one writer many years ago said, the ideal wife, painted here in the last chapter of the book of Proverbs.

We learn from the words of King Memuel - what he learned from his mother. She had warned him against strong drink and the wrong kind of women. And in this chapter, which closes with a hymn of praise, of ideal womanhood.

We cannot be sure that King Memuel is describing his own mother. But many a man would think of his own mother as he reads this immortal passage.

Years ago a minister would sometimes read this chapter in family worship. Then he would close the Bible, and before kneeling down in prayer, he would look around the family circle and say -- boys, there's your mother.

Women have had an important part in the history of this nation, and in the making of the home.

A few years ago when Douglas MacArthur II, who had previously served as counsellor of state - in the State Department under John Foster Dullas. MacArthur was a hard worker - he was like Dullas. Once when Dullas telephoned the MacArthur home asking for "Doug" - Mrs. MacArthur mistook him for a maid. And snapped back - MacArthur is where he always is....weekdays, Saturdays, Sundays, and nights... in that office.

Within minutes MacArthur got a telephone order from Dullas. Go home at once, boy, your home front is crumbling.)

Now this little bit of humor about a crumbling home front has become a serious thing in our time.

Down through the years women have had their problems in trying to get men to help build great homes.

I read this rathering interesting story about Col. William Byrd, one of the commissioners appointed by the governor of Virginia to run the boundary line between Virginia and North Carolina, in the year 1729. He said, the things he discovered along the way. "The men make their wives rise out of their beds early in the morning. At the same time, they lie and snore until the sun has 1/3 runs it's course, and dispursed all the unwholesome damps. Then after stretching and yawning for half an hour, they light their pipes, and under the protection of a cloud of smoke, venture into the open air. Though if it happens to be never so little cold, they quickly return shivering to the chimney's corner. When the weather is mild they stand leaning with both their arms on the corner

of the cornfield fence. And gravely consider whether they had best go and take a small heat at the hoe, but generally find reasons to put it off until another time. Thus they loiter away their lives like Solomon Sluggard with their arms across. And at the end of the year they scarcely have bread to eat."

Now the bulk of the population is made up of small farmers, who worked their own land.

V. 10 - The King wanted to know where he could find a virtuous woman. Now he had found her. And here is what follows. As he gives a description of this woman.

First, he notes her industry.

V. 27 - She looketh well to the ways of her household. And eateth not the bread of idleness.

Now the bread of idleness is what Col. Byrd said the men he met along the way were feeding upon. But the King said this was not the case - she hates to sit doing nothing. Now many women feed upon this source and it becomes the source of weakness and evil in their life. The Devil will soon find something for you to do when you eat the bread of idleness. Imagination works on idleness.

But here is a woman who does not even let her candle go out by night.

The candle is the symbol of the sacrificial life of this good woman.

I love to think of her like a blessed candle, burning through life's long night. Greatly useful, simple, gentle, tender - always giving light.

George Elliott's sketch of Amos Burton, lighting candles at early morning and attacking the heap of stockings at her side is very interesting. Mrs. Burton carried upstairs the remainder of the heap of stockings, and layed them on a table close to her bedside. Where also she placed a warm shawl. Removing her candle, before she put it out, to a tin socket fixed at the head of her bed. Her body was very weary but her heart was not heavy. In spite of Mr. Wood's, the butcher, and the transitory nature of shoe leather, for her heart so over-floweth with love that she thought sure she was near a fountain of love that would care for husband and babies better than she could forsee. So she was soon asleep. But about half past five in the morning, if there were any angels watching around her bed, and angels might be glad of such an office, they saw Mrs. Burton rise up quietly. Careful not to disturb the slumbering Amos, who was snoring - the snore of the just. Light her candle, prop herself upright with the pillow, throw the warm shawl around her shoulders and renew her attack on the heap of undarned stockings.

V. 15 - She riseth while it is yet still night. How many sons and daughters will remember that - how their mother rose before it was day and had their breakfast ready for them as they started out to battle a new day. She rises to provide food. She rises to provide instructions.

## II. HER LOYALTY

V. 11 - The ideal woman is loyal to her husband and to her children. The

heart of her husband doth faithfully trust in her. She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. Her husband is known in the gates. She faithfully forwards him and in all good things. She will not hinder him in the success and advancement.

I think that men who make any mark in life must be related to the fidelity of wives.

On the grave of Jane Welsh, in the churchyard, Thomas Carlyle suffered a lot of remorse because he had neglected his wife - put these words: "For 40 years she was the true and loving helpmate of her husband. And by act and word unwearily forwarded him as none else could in all that was worthy of what he did or attempted." She died at London - 21st of April, 1866. Suddenly snatched from him and the light of his life had gone out.

V. 12 - She will do him good all of her life. She delights to work with her hands, or of which her hands make beautiful things. She rewards him with good all of her days--now this is not just a romantic flash at the beginning of their relationship, their honeymoon. But this is clearly down to the very end a love that never tires, and a love that does good.

What can surpass the loyalty of a good wife or a good mother.

A writer, in a book, "Out Of The Night" tells about his memory of his godly mother. He tells us how his mother sold the family silver and bought for him sea boots, blankets, oil skins. And gave him a small Bible as he was about to go to sea. When they parted at Hamburg, he saw her last at the train window. Shabby, frail, sad, and invincibility loyal.

How marvelous - she shows her love in not crossing him but in help - in health and in sickness all the days of her life. She is loyal.

III. HER CHARITY - V. 20

She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. That is, she opens her hand to the unfortunate. She opens her hands to the poor. Sometimes women are sacrificial and self-denying at home with their families. But outside of their home, they do not have that compassionate feeling. She stretched forth her hand to the poor, and to the needy. She was like Dorcas, whom we read of in the book of Acts. And whom Peter raised from the dead. This woman was full of good works and deeds. When Peter came to her home, he found all the widows mourning over her, and they showed him the coats and garments which Dorcas made while she was with them. Yes, the tears of the poor.

I read of a person once who at Christmas recollects how his mother sent him across to a humble home in a poor section where he left a basket of supplies for the family. He said, I think I learned that morning the truth of the beautiful saying of our Lord which was, saved and recovered for us by Paul in his farewell address at Miletus, to the elders of the church at Ephesus. How it is -- "much more blessed to give than to receive."

IV. HER SPEECH - V. 26

"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness."

Her mouth speaks wisely. Her mouth speaks kindly.

In an old tombstone in Egypt, there was inscribed these words --  
Peace was in the words which came from his mouth, and the book of the wise was on his tongue. How marvelous it is for women to use their tongue with the right kind of speech.

I heard of a man who had great difficulty with his tongue. Especially with cursing, it was a major problem with him. Being greatly concerned about it he decided to go see his minister for help. After discussing the problem at length with the pastor, he was still not satisfied. A practical man, he wanted something tangible in the solution. The wise pastor, seeing this suggested that everytime he felt like cursing, he should sing a hymn. Only the man didn't know many hymns. The preacher gave him a hymn book and sent him on his way. After a few days the man returned again to see the pastor. His face was beaming.

How are you doing, asked the pastor. Fine, was the reply. Pastor, I am making progress. But I am ready for a new hymn book.

Now this in a way is a sense of humor. It really is an absolute necessity. Because where the tongue is wrongly used, and I say at this point, women are pre-eminently able over men at this point - the famous description of the tongue -- James calls it the world of iniquity which setteth on fire the course of nature. And it is set on fire of Hell. But here is a woman with the law of kindness on her tongue. No ill report gains an inch of territory through her passing it on to another. She doesn't repeat wrong to others. She thinks no evil and rejoices not in iniquity. But she rejoices in the truth.

Where praise is possible, she praises. Where it is not possible, she keeps quiet.

A wonderful Christian woman once commented when somebody asked her about an unworthy person. She said, yes, but that person is one of those souls for whom Christ died.

V. HER CHARACTER - V. 30

A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Was she a beautiful woman. Nothing is said about that. But all the better, if these lovely traits were trained for the charm of womanly beauty - will last as long as the charm of a beautiful sunrise. What is emphasized here is another kind of beauty. It is the beauty of the soul.

V. 25 - Strength and honor are her clothing. And she shall rejoice in the time to come.

What he says is that beauty is vain, and also deceitful. It may become an evil to temptation.

V. 31 - Her own works are going to praise her. Give her the rewards she has earned. Let the gates ring with the praise of her deeds and of her life. This is a woman who deserves praise because charm is deceitful and beauty is fleeting. But the woman who remembers the Lord is one who deserves our praise. Now this is most interesting because it throws light on the domestic activities

at that time. And it tells about this woman who managed to have the responsibility of a wife and mother in ancient Israel. This is very interesting. A virtuous woman, who can find. The worldly woman you can find anywhere today. Her name is legion. But the virtuous woman. The worldly woman handles cards and cocktails and spends her time in the law of gossip. But here is another kind of woman. Thou excellest them all. Dewitt Talmadge used to tell when his father was absent from the New Jersey farm house. The mother would take the father's place at the family altar and would always pray for all her children that they might become subjects of converted grace. Name if you can, a higher and stronger, a more uplifting or abiding influence than that of a good mother.

The ancient sketch of the ideal woman was written before Christ came. Now the Christian can add a few strokes of his own. And he can talk about the woman who was last at the cross. He can talk about the woman who loves the church. Or that woman who was there first at the tomb.

Do you women today know the highest joy in life. Would you repeat and renew yourself and have yourself to go on from generation to generation. Then join the company of women who followed Christ, who ministered for him, and brought their spices to anoint his body.

Dr. E. D. Head Boy loved - Exhausted face -  
Ministered to by father, mother, doctor  
Protracted illness - all had helpless - body wasted -  
Mother extra toil -  
one day - off bed - stroked my brow  
"Mother she has been worrying about you this morning"  
"I'm sorry she's so much trouble."  
"Don't you get tired of waiting on me?"  
Pause - tenderness stroked his brow - "No son, mother doesn't get  
tired of waiting on you. Mother loves her boy"