

- your highest ambition.
- 4) Retain your honour by continually living as a gracious woman. God is not nearly as interested in what you once were as He is in what you presently are.
 - 5) Just as a flower without constant water will wilt and fade, so your honour will wilt and fade if you do not constantly live a gracious or grace-worthy life.

b. Retaining honour takes discipline

- 1) Retaining honour requires living a favourable life every day. That is not automatic.
- 2) Retaining your honour takes discipline.
 - a) To retain honour, Noah walked with God. Moses talked with God face to face. Gideon lived a godly life even in time of danger.
 - b) To retain honour, you too must discipline yourself to keep sin out of your life. When you do sin, confess it right away.
 - c) You must discipline yourself to read the Bible daily and spend quality time with God in prayer.
 - d) You must discipline yourself to live your life to please the Lord rather than yourself.
- 3) Remember, the Lord said that He honours those who honour Him.

Conclusion: Ladies, every one of you can be a gracious woman if you will. You can find grace in God's eyes as well as in the eyes of those around you **if you will become a Christian** and **then live your life to please the Lord**. Remember, your honour will fade if your gracious life stops watering it. Determine to retain honour at any cost. Separate from sinful pleasures and sacrifice time and energy to please the Lord. You CAN be a gracious woman who retains honour! Make it your goal! If Jesus Christ has not yet forgiven your sin and given you eternal life, which is where you must begin. I would be happy to explain it to you if you will just ask me.

Song: I Have Decided - 397

A Gracious Woman

9 May 2021 AM – Proverbs 11:16 – Mother's Day – Scott Childs

Introduction: If you have never read the account of Queen Esther in the Bible, you need to. Every time I read the book of Esther, the drama excites me. Young Esther found favour in the sight of the king, and he chose her as his queen. Later, to protect the Jews, Queen Esther entered the king's throne room uninvited to petition his help. Again, she found grace in his eyes and he held out his sceptre and spared her life. God used this gracious woman's character and trust in God to save the Jews from wicked Haman's plot.

This morning we are going to look at another gracious woman, if you are a woman she could be you.

Transition: Though it is Mother's Day, this sermon is for all women not just mothers. Actually, much of it could even apply to us men. For our benefit this morning, I want to point out three facts about a gracious woman as described by Solomon in Proverbs 11:16 (read).

1. Every Woman can be a Gracious Woman

a. To be gracious is to find acceptance with God

- 1) The first time this Hebrew word is found in the Bible is in Genesis 6:8. "**But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.**" Because Noah lived a righteous and wholesome life and walked with God in a very wicked world, he found grace, favour or acceptance in God's sight (Ge 6:9). **This is the meaning of being gracious.**
- 2) The Lord gave **Joseph favour** (grace or acceptance) because he honoured the Lord with his life (Ge 39:21).
- 3) **Moses** also found **grace** with God as he led the rebellious Israelites through the wilderness (Ex 33:12-13).
- 4) God-fearing **Gideon** found grace in God's sight during the dark period of the Judges (Judg 6:17).
- 5) The Psalmist tells us, (Psalms 84:11) "**For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.**"
- 6) The word "**grace**" is more frequently used of finding grace in the eyes of some human superior.

- a) **Ruth** found grace in the eyes of Boaz (Ru 2:10).
 - b) **Hannah** found grace in the eyes of Eli (1Sa 1:18).
 - c) **David** found favour in King Saul's eyes (1Sa 16:22).
 - d) **Esther** obtained favour before the king (Est 5:2).
- 7) The word translated grace sometimes implies charm or beauty (Pr 31:30).

b. Receiving grace is potential for all

- 1) God gives grace or acceptance to all who honoured Him. **If you honour the Lord with your life, He will give you grace.** Note what the Lord said to Eli the priest, (1 Samuel 2:30) *"... them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed."*
 - a) The first thing you must do to honour the Lord is to repent of your sin and trust Him alone to save your soul from hell. (Romans 10:9) *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*
 - b) Once you have received Christ, He wants you to live a clean life to please Him. (Romans 13:14) *"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."* (Ephesians 5:8) *"For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light."*
 - c) If you truly know the Lord, you can receive His grace.
- 2) Here are other things that can help to find grace in the eyes of God and other people.
 - a) Obeying parental instruction and laws will give grace (Pr 1:9).
 - b) Wisdom from God will give you grace (Pr 3:22).
 - c) God gives grace to the lowly or humble (Pr 3:34).
 - d) Good understanding or prudence gives favour (Pr 13:15).
- 3) Becoming a gracious or accepted woman (especially in God's sight) is not accomplished by flattery, showiness, immodesty or boastfulness. It is gained by **humble sincerity, right living and dependence on God.**
- 4) You CAN become a gracious woman!

2. Being a Gracious Woman is an Honour

a. This is a high honour. (Read text)

- 1) The idea of **honour** is that of glory, splendour or dignity.
- 2) To be honoured by men for quality character is very special, but to be honoured by God for godly character is one of the highest honours possible.
- 3) Seek to be honoured by God as did the Apostle Paul who wrote, (Philippians 3:14) *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."*

b. You will receive this honour if you are gracious.

- 1) Our text (Pr 11:16) gives you God's assurance that finding grace in God's eyes will result in honour.
- 2) Being honoured by God does not necessarily mean that you will have an easy life. God may reserve your greatest honour for heaven. Remember this promise. (1 Corinthians 15:58) *"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."*

3. Every Gracious Woman ought to Retain Honour

a. You must retain your honour.

- 1) The word translated "**retain**" means to grasp or to hold. Honour must be held fast. To lose one's honour is a disgrace and a huge loss.
- 2) Look at the second half of our text verse. This verse is Hebrew parallel poetry. The first phrase is explained or enhanced by the second phrase.
 - a) The **strong men** are those who are awe-inspiring, terror-striking, awesome, ruthless, or mighty.
 - b) They are resolutely determined to retain their riches. They are resolved that no one will take their riches from them. They will fight to the death to defend their riches.
- 3) This gives you a better understanding of the urgency and determination with which you must retain your honour. Knowing the Lord as your Saviour and living a godly life that pleases Him is more than a nice goal. It ought to be