

Great Women in 2005

Introduction:

1. The woman of Shunem was a “great woman,” but this refers to her estate, rather than character (II King 4:8-37); however, this woman has more written of her character and life than most other women in the Bible.
2. I have reduced the main points of this sermon to four in the hope they might be easier to remember and apply.
3. My goal is to encourage the girls and women of this church to be great in the sight of God and good men.
4. You can do very much to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour and promote the true gospel by your lives.
5. You can reprove the world, remind them of the glory of a woman, and defend the truth of God by your lives.
6. You can help your husbands be great men, raise boys to become great men, and provoke men to holiness.
7. You can earn the favor and honor of God and men in this life and the reward of God our Father in the next.
8. You can glorify femininity, modesty, chastity, virginity, graciousness, virtue, diligence, spiritual religion, love, marriage, childbearing, child training, righteousness, and wisdom by your lives in a cruel, hard world.
9. Mothers, sisters, and daughters in Christ, I desire each of you to be a great woman in the earth for our Lord.
10. A great woman turns the head of our blessed God, all good men and women, and your husband and children.

What Is a Great Woman?

- A. Which women in the Bible come to mind as great women that you would like to emulate and follow?
 1. Is it the combined beauty and wisdom of Abigail, or the maternal spirituality of Lois and Eunice?
 2. Is it the spiritual eagerness of Mary of Bethany, or the forgiven faithfulness of Mary Magdalene?
 3. Is it the combined beauty and faith of Sarah, or the humble suffering and meekness of Leah?
 4. Is it Phoebe, the diligent servant of Paul and others, or the desperate and devoted Hannah?
 5. Is it the virtuous woman in all her perfection, or is it holy Anna who gave herself to the Lord?
 6. Is it the woman who bathed our Lord's feet with tears and kisses, or bold and eager Rebecca?
 7. Is it faithful Rahab the harlot saving her family, or virtuous Ruth losing her family for Christ?
 8. Is it the great Shunammite that roomed Elisha, or the great Shulamite that was Solomon's wife?
 9. Is it Lydia, the converted professional woman, or faithful and beautiful Esther that hung Haman?
 10. Is it the fearless and zealous Jael, or the fearless, submissive, and virgin daughter of Jephthah?
 11. Is it the mother of our Lord Jesus, or the Syrophenician woman that would not be discouraged?
 12. Is it Dorcas with many widows grieving her death, or Priscilla in assisting to convert Appollos?
 13. Is it Deborah being judge of Israel due to no men, or Samson's mother that gave them a judge?
 14. Is it Elizabeth who walked before the Lord blameless, or Damaris converted with Dionysius?
- B. Which women come to mind in the Bible as evil women that you would like to identify and reject?
 1. Is it Mrs. Job and her sarcastic ridicule of her husband, or the obsessed-with-the-world Mrs. Lot?
 2. Is it the odious woman that the earth cannot stand, or the widows that are dead while yet alive?
 3. Is it the haughty and status-conscious Michal, or Jezebel with vile hatred and evil in her heart?
 4. Is it the perfectly dolled up ladies of Israel that God despised, or the strange woman of Proverbs?
 5. Is it Herodias, who killed for her adultery, or Vashti who would not submit to her husband?
 6. Is it the daughters of Sodom with too much idleness, or the daughters of this world enticing men?
 7. Is it Delilah that ruined one good man for money, or Mrs. Potiphar that tried merely for pleasure?
- C. She is a woman in favor with God and men, a godly goal (Prov 3:1-4; Luke 1:28; 2:52; I Sam 2:26).
- D. She is the opposite of those things Solomon describes of the strange woman and the odious woman.
- E. She can be a great testimony for the truth and reproof of error (Matt 5:13-16; I Tim 5:14; Tit 2:3-5).
- F. The qualifications for a widow indeed provide a list of traits that God values highly (I Tim 5:1-10).
 1. She is a woman of faith, for she trusts in God in her desolate and vulnerable situation (5:5).
 2. She is a woman of prayer, for she continues in supplications and prayers night and day (5:5).
 3. She is not eager for pleasure like most women that are dead practically in comparison (5:6).
 4. She is committed to one man in fidelity and faithfulness for the entirety of her life (5:9).
 5. She has a public reputation that is well known for good works, which requires a lot (5:10).

6. She has trained children well, whether her own or others, in the fear of the Lord (5:10).
 7. She has shown gracious hospitality even to strangers, much like the woman of Shunem (5:10).
 8. She has shown humble service to others, indicated by the custom then of washing feet (5:10).
 9. She was quick to help the poor and troubled in times of need, like the virtuous woman (5:10).
 10. She diligently pursued every good work that the word of God commends for women (5:10).
- G. The dangers and duties of younger women help us fill out the traits of great women (I Tim 5:11-15).
1. Sinful temptations for women are idleness, wandering visitors, tattlers, and busybodies (5:13).
 2. Marriage is a good thing and helps keep women out of trouble arising from being single (5:14).
 3. Bearing children is a woman's role and goal and also helps her stay out of trouble (5:14).
 4. If she oversees domestic duties efficiently, she will not have time to be a busybody (5:14).
 5. She can shut the mouths of enemies that might rail against the gospel for lazy women (5:14).
- H. The holy women of old time gave the example for holy women of the present time (I Peter 3:1-6).
1. The "this manner" and "also" in old time by holy women was Peter's present doctrine (3:1-5).
 2. They first (adorned themselves!) by wifely subjection to their husband with fear (3:1-2,5-6).
 3. They were also chaste in lifestyle, which would include thought, word, deed, dress, etc. (3:2).
 4. They had reverence for their husbands that came from the fear of God and husband (3:2,6).
 5. They had beautiful (adorning!) spirits that were characterized by meekness and quietness (3:3-4).
 6. They emphasized the inner quality of a gracious spirit over outward physical appearance (3:3-4).
 7. But they did not fear their husbands so much to be discouraged or led into any compromise (3:6).
- I. Paul's character traits for great women are similar to Peter's, both by the Holy Ghost (I Tim 2:9-12).
1. Great women adorn themselves with modest apparel – not provocative, not dowdy (Pr 31:22).
 2. They have a demeanor of shamefacedness and sobriety, which is modest, reserved, and grave.
 3. They emphasize good works as their adornment, rather than the outward games of the world.
 4. They learn in quiet with great submission, for they understand their creation and their failure.
 5. They cheerfully give up any teaching role or efforts to usurp authority over the men.

She Fears the Lord

- A. The fear of God is far superior to favor or beauty, regardless of what the world teaches (Prov 31:30).
1. Favor is performance to win a man, which every woman does during courtship or dating; but this altered behavior to get her man is deceitful, for even whores know all about such techniques.
 2. Beauty is vain, because it has no relation to character at all and will fade entirely with time.
 3. But the fear of the Lord will cause a woman to do what is right and noble her entire life. Glory!
- B. Her every decision is based on faith in God and absolute surrender to His holy precepts in Scripture.
- C. She is spiritually minded like Mary, craving doctrine rather than foolish activities (Luke 10:38-42).
- D. She is not afraid of men in a way that would lead to compromise (Ex 1:15-21; I Pet 3:6; I Sam 25).
- E. She trusts men to protect her vulnerability and weakness (I Cor 14:34-35; II Tim 3:6-7; I Pet 3:7).
- F. She is a great woman of prayer like Hannah, Mary, and Anna (I Sam 2:1-10; Luk 1:46-55; 2:36-38).
- G. What can she do to improve? Be a woman of the word, meditation, prayer, doctrine, and teaching.
- H. What can she do to miss it? Have worldly friends, emphasize bodily exercise, esteem activities, love clothes, value family too highly, care too much for her husband, get too excited about a career, etc.

She Is Gracious

- A. Graciousness is the most beautifying character trait a woman can acquire (Proverbs 11:22; 22:11).
- B. It will secure for her the perpetual respect and adoration of others, which she desires (Prov 11:16).
- C. Graciousness includes courtesy, humility, discretion, politeness, kindness, cheerfulness, agreeableness, charming ways, winning grace, reservation, meekness, gentleness, condescension, becoming manner, well bred, responsive, friendly, meek, tolerant, prudent, attractive, polished, etc.
- D. Graciousness includes the meek and quiet spirit that is of great price in God's sight (I Peter 3:3-4).
- E. Graciousness includes the shamefaced and sober demeanor of reserved humility (I Timothy 2:9-10).

- F. Graciousness includes reverence and subjection she owes her husband in marriage (I Pet 3:1-2,5-6).
- G. Graciousness includes the remarkable acts and traits that widows indeed had (I Timothy 5:1-10).
- H. Abigail humbled herself to turn a David with tact and wisdom; Rebecca served a stranger's camels!
- I. The virtuous woman has the law of kindness in her mouth and never speaks without it being wise.
- J. She is NEVER indiscrete, foolish, moody, stubborn, pouting, angry, or unconventional (Eccl 10:1).
- K. She is NEVER out of balance by being too carnal and vain or overmuch righteous and holy.
- I. What can she do to improve? Talk more, if she is too quiet. Talk less, if she is talkative. Be agreeable, humble, submissive, cheerful, serving, and selfless. Never talk about herself, but always ask and be concerned about others. Condescend to the lowly with true affection (Rom 12:16).
- J. What can she do to miss it? Be indiscreet, selfish, off-the-wall, negative, stubborn, opinionated, moody, critical, questioning, business-like most of the time, unsmiling, or too reserved.

She Is Diligent

- A. Reading Proverbs 31:10-31 indicates the greatest mark of virtue is diligence. That woman worked!
- B. She is known for good works domestically and socially, for she gets a great deal done everywhere.
- C. It is a false concept of womanhood in Christian countries that the woman is to have a life of leisure.
- D. A great woman is NOT like the daughters of Sodom or the USA, which are known for idleness (Ezek 16:49); the curse and duty of labor is by sin in Eden, and it helps save us from sin by activity.
- E. A woman must be efficient, have a sense of time urgency, delegate well, prioritize like a genius, etc.
- F. What can she do to improve? Eschew phone, Internet, television, reading, chatting, primping, sleeping, shopping, recreation, amusement, entertainment, hobbies, and other time wasters.
- G. What can she do to miss it? Trust her husband to take care of things, have an idea of leisure for Christian women, excuse herself with a half day's work, take the time to read a foolish novel, etc.

She Is Influential

- A. She loves childbearing and child training, even beyond her own children, for she has a glorious vision of family trees serving the Lord in righteousness and truth.
- B. She invests spiritually in her grandchildren, her nephews and nieces, and in all young children.
- C. Childbearing and child training is a godly ambition (Gen 18:12; 30:1; Prov 30:15-16; I Tim 5:10,14).
- D. Lois and Eunice were great women for exemplary faith and influence on Timothy (II Tim 1:5; 3:15).
- E. Hannah trained Samuel to worship at a very young age and be a virtuous man (I Sam 1:21-28; 12:3).
- F. Every little girl will be a grandmother: she should always be viewed as such and trained for such.
- G. The goal in training children is to perpetuate the fear of the Lord and the truth of the gospel; it is not getting a diploma, degrees, trophies in soccer, awards in playing piano, etc. Get your priorities right!
- H. She is very hospitable and serving, as the woman of Shunem, Dorcas, Priscilla, and widows indeed.
- I. What are you doing to serve the church by exhorting and provoking members to godliness and faith?
- J. Will there be many truly saddened at your funeral for the loss and gratefulness for your influence?
- K. What can she do to improve? Get a spiritual goal for each of her children and settle for nothing less.
- L. What can she do to miss it? Let the world help set her priorities so that she dies with little influence.

Conclusion:

- 1. Here are four simple goals for every girl and woman to be a great woman: fear of the Lord, graciousness, diligence, and influence. It is by these four areas of life that you can grow in favor with God and man.
- 2. You can be truly beautiful in the sight of God, your husband, your children, and all good men and women by adorning yourself with these things. The world only offers outward adorning that is worthless and fades away.
- 3. You can be salt in the earth by retarding the decay of the fairer sex by showing them the glory of true womanhood in the face of masculine, overbearing, professional females that do not have a clue of femininity.
- 4. May the Lord Jesus Christ be glorified and honored by a whole church of holy girls and women in Greenville.