

## Lessons Lemuel Learned

King Lemuel likely lived in luxury as he sat on his high and exalted throne.

He ruled over peasants.

He ruled over Priests

He ruled over princes.

He ruled over hundreds and thousands of people, exuding a tremendous amount of power and authority to anyone who got in his way.

He laughed at those who sought to destroy him.

He scoffed at things that would pollute his mind.

He was a man who had a heart.

Every single day, he made it his goal, his, his aim, his aspiration, to see to look past the flesh and straight into the heart of man.

Even though he was a man who sat on a throne...

Even though he was a man who held a golden scepter...

Even though he was a man who had a tremendous amount of power...

Even though this crown rested on his head, he never allowed it to get to his head...

You see, even though this crown rested on his head, he never, ever, ever, ever forgot the words that his dear mother said...

King Lemuel was a man who was truly in control.

And so, this evening as we consider Proverbs chapter 31, as we consider this scene in this life of King Lemuel, the question we ask ourselves this morning is: What did she say?...

In **Proverbs 31:1-2**, the Bible says... **READ...**

What are you doing?! Three times Lemuel's mother asks her son, "What are you doing?"

And she didn't ask him this question three times because he didn't hear her.

And she wasn't asking him this question to get a response.

Lemuel's mother repeats herself in this way to get his attention.

In this passage, we hear an impassioned exclamation from a mother expressing her inward emotions as she is completely overwhelmed at the thought of her son falling prey to some form of evil.

## I. **Control Your Body, v.3**

1. What are you doing, my son?! What are you doing?! What are you doing?!, **verse 3, “Do not give your strength to women, your ways to those who destroy kings.”**
2. Lemuel, the first thing I want you to remember is, as King: You must learn how to control your body.
3. Do not give your strength to women.
4. You are strong, you are mighty, you are powerful, you are respected and feared throughout all the land.
5. You sit on the throne, you wear the crown, you hold the scepter.
6. You are King—Don’t throw it all away.
7. Don’t give your strength to women. Don’t allow a woman’s appeal and your desire for her to bring you down. Control your Body.
8. As his mother spoke to him, perhaps Lemuel’s mind was brought back to the life of Samson, one of the strongest men in history, whose life ended in a pitiful way—bound, bald, and blind, because he allowed a woman to con him into telling her his source of strength (**Judges 13-16**).
9. Or maybe, as Lemuel’s mother spoke to him, his mind was drawn to the young man in **Proverbs chapter 7** who lacked sense.
10. The man who, in the shelter of the night, passed along the street corner near her house, was captivated by her appearance, was struck by her speech, and enticed by her empty home, then suddenly, as an ox goes to the slaughter, or as a stag is caught fast, an arrow pierces his liver, and he would have never imagined that this woman would have cost him his life.
11. All because he was unable to control his body.
12. And so, what Lemuel’s mother is saying to him in this passage is: As King, you must learn how to control your body.
13. **Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways; do not stray into her paths, for many a victim she has laid low, and all her slain are a MIGHTY throng—they are Kings, they are princes, they are rulers, they are people of great power, her house is the way to Hell, going down to the chambers of death (Proverbs 7:24-27).**

Lemuel, as King, you must always remember to Control Your Body, do not give your strength to women, But, not only that... SON, as King, I want you to always remember to **Control Your Mind...**

## II. Control Your Mind, v.4-7

1. In **Proverbs 31:4**, she says... **READ...** She is repeating herself, “It is not for Kings Oh, Lemuel, it is not for Kings...” She is trying to get his attention! She is trying to make a point...
2. **Verse 4...READ...**
3. Kings, People of Power, People of Great importance, people who are privileged, people who have a tremendous amount of responsibility do not drink wine or strong drink.
4. Why? Lest they forget, **verse 5... READ...**
5. Those who are Kings, those who are powerful, those who are of great importance do not drink because they forget, they lose control of their minds.
6. The Prophet Hosea would say, in **Hosea 4:11**, “**Sexual immorality, wine, and new wine, take away understanding.**”
7. And what Lemuel’s mother is saying to him in **Proverbs chapter 31** is: As King, understanding is essential. Wisdom, knowledge, discretion, and judgement are essential. And if you are drunk with wine, all of that is lost.
8. She continues to say, in **verse 6-7... READ...**
9. What Lemuel’s mother is saying to him is: Strong drink and wine are for those who are perishing, not for Kings, not for people who are ruling, not for people of great importance because wine and strong drink alters your mind.
10. And as King you need your mind. You have decisions to make, you have people to protect, and you have a nation to rule.

You must Control Your Mind... But not only that, King Lemuel’s mother stresses upon him the importance of Softening His Heart. As King you must Control Your Body, Control Your Mind, and **Soften Your Heart...**

## III. Soften Your Heart, v.8-9

1. In **Proverbs 31:8**, King Lemuel’s mother says... **READ...**
2. Lemuel, while you are ruling as King, while you hold the golden scepter, while you are seated on your throne, and during this time in your life when you have so much influence—Look out into this world and see the poor, see the needy, see the destitute, and have compassion on them.
3. Love them, care for them, speak to them, speak up for them, help them, and Soften Your Heart.
4. Naturally, as king, Lemuel had a desire to strengthen the economy, build up cities, protect his people, and make a name for himself throughout all of this world, this was all fine and good, but here in **Proverbs chapter 31**, Lemuel’s mother is telling him: The economy, infrastructure, a strong military, and earthly fame and popularity is not nearly as important as Helping those who are in need.
5. During the days of the Prophet, Micah, the Children of Israel asked the Prophet, “What is Good?” Micah cries back, “**He has told you, Oh, Man what is Good! And that is, Do Justice, Love Mercy, and Walk Humbly before God (Micah 6:8).**”
6. As King, Lemuel’s mother is saying: You must be someone who does what is good.
7. Be someone who loves others, cares for others, shows mercy to others, and Soften Your Heart.

But not only that, fourth and finally, Lemuel’s mother encourages him to **See Her Soul...** As King, you must Control Your Body, Control Your Mind, Soften Your Heart, and See Her Soul... Whose soul is she talking about, Tim? The soul of the woman that he would soon marry.

#### IV. See Her Soul, v.10-31

1. Proverbs 31:10-30... READ...
2. It is very interesting that as Lemuel's mother is talking about the perfect wife, she says nothing to him about her face, her hair, her nails, her makeup, her clothing, her figure, her beauty... Lemuel's mother says absolutely nothing to him about his future wife's physical appearance, everything she says to him, about this woman, is in reference to her soul...
3. This is a woman who works hard, she takes care of her family, she is respected in the community, and most importantly, she fears the Lord.
4. This is the type of woman that you must search for, Lemuel.
5. This is the type of woman that you must find.
6. This is the type of woman that you must marry.
7. This is the type of person that you should want to spend the rest of your life with.
8. Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised!
9. Don't be so focused and so concerned about her physical appearance, but look into her heart and see her soul.
10. See a woman who stand out in the community.
11. Serves her community.
12. Serves her children.
13. She loves her children (husband)
14. Her children love her.
15. This is the type of woman who is going to help you as king, and this is the type of woman who will help you serve the Lord. See Her Soul...

Here in Proverbs chapter 31, as Lemuel is sitting on his throne, reigning as King, with his crown on his resting head, he recalls to mind the words that his dear mother said: Control Your Body, Control Your Mind, Soften Your Heart, and See Her Soul. Do this and you will live. Do this and you will be respected. Do this and you will be known in the gates when you sit among the elders in the land.

#### Application:

Today is December 27, 2022, and those of us who are Christians are much like King Lemuel.

We may not sit on a throne, hold a scepter, or wear a golden crown, but as Christians, like Kings, we are an incredibly blessed and privileged people.

In 1 Peter chapter 2, as the Apostle Peter is speaking to Christians who are suffering all over the world, he encourages them by reminding them of who they are.

They are a Royal Priesthood, a Holy Nation, a people who have been called out of darkness into the Lord's Marvelous Light, a people who once were not a people, but now they are God's people... (1 Peter 9-10).

As Christians this is who they were, and this is who we are, and as people who have been extremely blessed by God, as people, and to whom much has been given, much is required...

Since we are so blessed, like Lemuel, we too must be people who learn how to Control Our Bodies...

## I. Control Our Bodies

1. In **1 Corinthians chapter 6**, as the Apostle Paul is dealing with sexual immorality in the church at Corinth, he reminds these brethren that their bodies are a temple of God, they are not their own, therefore, they must glorify God in their bodies.
2. The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord.
3. Someone may say, well, Tim, God gave me these desires and I cannot help myself. I must satisfy the desires that God has given me.
4. That was the same argument that the Christians here in Corinth were making.
5. I have this desire to eat. God has given me this desire to satisfy my belly, therefore I am going to eat food.
6. In the same way, God has given me these passions, therefore, I am going to satisfy my passion, even if it is outside of the marriage relationship.
7. Paul says, that is the wrong attitude to have, you must learn how to control your body.
8. Paul says in the latter half of **1 Corinthians 6:13b-18a... READ...**
9. Since we are Christians, since we are God's people, since we are apart of this Royal Family, we must be people who learn how to control our bodies, we are going to be people who, **verse 18... READ... Flee from sin...**
10. We are going to avoid sin, we are going to be people like Joseph, who RUN from Potiphar's wife (**Genesis 39:13**), we are not going to give our strength to anyone or anything.
11. Jesus would say, **"If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out, if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off, and if your right hand causes you to sin, get rid of it, it is better for you to go through life, blind, crippled, and lame, than to end up in hell where the worm never dies, and the fire is not quenched (Mark 9:43-48)."**

Do not give your strength to the vain, and temporal pleasures of this world, as children of God, we must learn to Control Our Bodies, but not only that, as people who have been richly blessed by the Lord, like King Lemuel, we must Control of Our Minds.

## II. Control Our Minds

1. In **1 Peter 5:8**, the Apostle Peter was writing to Christians who were living in a world full of sin, temptation, and physical persecution.
2. Peter was writing to a group of Christians who were living in a world that was heavily influenced by Satan, and he says to them in **verse 8**, as you live in such a world, if you want to stay grounded in the Truth of God's Word, if you have a desire to hold on to the imperishable hope that God has provided for you; to keep Satan from robbing you of your eternal blessings, you must... **BE SOBER-MINDED, and BE WATCHFUL, because Satan has a desire to destroy you.**
3. If you knew for a fact that someone would come to your house tonight- rob you, kill children, and wife. Wouldn't you want to be awake and alert? Or would you be drunk?
4. And so why is it that we know for a fact that Satan himself is prowling around this world seeking to destroy you and your family... And so why would we...
5. What Peter is saying to these Christians is: You must be in Control of your Mind.
6. And friends, there is no way that we can have complete control of our minds, be on the alert, and watchful for the Satan and his vices if we are filled with the intoxicants of this world.
7. Instead of filling our hearts and our minds with all of the garbage in this world that makes us completely vulnerable to Satan and his vices, may we fill our hearts and our minds with the fruit of the Spirit.
8. Paul says in **Ephesians 5:18**, **"Do not be drunk with wine for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."**
9. Be someone who has **Galatians 5:22** in their heart... how does this happen? It happens by spending time in God's Word.
10. Time in God's Word give us this sobriety of mind.
11. Time in God's Word give us wisdom

12. Time in God's Word gives us direction.
13. It gives us understanding.
14. It helps us stay on the alert.
15. It helps us become more and more careful, cautious, and watchful for Satan and his vices.

As Children of God, we must learn how to Control Our Minds, but not only that, as Children of God who have been richly, and abundantly blessed, we, like Lemuel must Soften Our Hearts...

### III. Soften Our Hearts

1. As people who are living on this side of Heaven,
2. As people who are living in this world,
3. And especially as people who are living in the United States of America,
4. It is very easy to be distracted.
5. It is very easy to allow all of the physical, temporal, and vain things of this world to rob us of our time and attention.
6. It is very easy to allow STUFF to keep us away from serving the Lord and serving other people.
7. It is very easy to allow STUFF to keep us away from LOVING the Lord, and LOVING other people...
8. These are the two greatest commands; Jesus says the whole Law and the Prophets rest on these two things (**Matthew 22:40**).
9. Our greatest concern in life should not be whether we are the smartest, the wealthiest, and the most popular person, our greatest concern in life should be whether we are glorifying God in our service to other people.
10. When we are serving other people, we are expressing our love for the Lord and our Love towards all mankind; our love towards men and women that He has created in His own precious image.
11. Friends, we must Soften Our Hearts.
12. We have been called to love our neighbors just as much as we love ourselves.
13. And every single day we see our neighbors struggling, hurting, and suffering in some way or another.
14. And as individual Christians, we have been called to do good to these people.
15. **Galatians 6:10** tells us to do good to all men...
16. What is good? **Micah 6:8**, "Justice, love, and Mercy."
17. James would tell us that, "Pure and undefiled religion is this: To visit the orphans and widow in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world (**James 1:27**).
18. Friends, the point that I'm trying to make is: We have not been put on this earth to live selfish lives, we have been put on this earth to humble ourselves at the foot of the cross, serve the Lord, and serve His people, and having this type of attitude as people who live in a world that is so contrary to this, requires a Softening of the Heart.

As Children of God who have been so blessed, we must Soften Our Hearts, but not only that, fourth and finally, as people who have been given so much, we, like Lemuel must See Her Soul...

#### **IV. See Her Soul**

1. In **Proverbs chapter 31**, As he was looking for a wife, Lemuel's mother encouraged him to look past a woman's physical appearance and see her soul.
2. The lesson is the same for us today, and I'm preaching to myself right now.
3. SELF... TIM.... And all of the other unmarried people here today... Listen to Lemuel's Mother's advice...
4. Charm is deceitful, beauty is vain, but a woman who fears the Lord should be praised...
5. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and Snapchat are doing are destroying our generations perspective on men and women.
6. Everyone presents their best self on Social media. Everyone takes their best selfie, with the best filters, to make their physical appearance look the best...
7. Young people, do not be deceived... he or she may be super handsome, beautiful, and attractive on Instagram and maybe even in person, but as a Child of God, you must make sure that you look beyond his or her physical appearance and into their heart, because THAT is what truly matters.
8. A man or a woman who works hard, is respected in the community, takes care of his or her family, and who fears the Lord is the type of man or woman that you must desire.
9. If this is your desire, more often than not, you will find yourself very happy, very satisfied, and extremely blessed, because this is the type of man or woman that is fit for a King. See Her Soul.

#### **Conclusion**

King Lemuel likely lived in luxury as he sat on his high and exalted throne.

He ruled over peasants. He ruled over princes. He ruled over hundreds and thousands of people, but in spite of all of this, in spite of his power and his fame, as his golden crown rested on his head, he never forgot the words that his mother said.

Son, as King, you must Control Your Body, Control Your Mind, Soften Your Heart, and See Her Soul.

When our time on this earth is done, the faithful have been promised to receive a mansion, a robe, and a crown.

If we want this promise to be a reality, while we have life, we are going to be people who: Control Our Bodies, Control Our Minds, and Soften Our Hearts...

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