

Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

BIBLE TEXT | PROVERBS 31:1-9

1 The words of King Lemuel. An oracle that his mother taught him:

2 What are you doing, my son? What are you doing, son of my womb? What are you doing, son of my vows?

3 Do not give your strength to women, your ways to those who destroy kings.

4 It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to take strong drink,

5 lest they drink and forget what has been decreed and pervert the rights of all the afflicted.

6 Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress

7 let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.

8 Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute.


9 Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.

DEVOTIONAL FOR PROVERBS 31:1-9

AUTHOR: AMANDA PATZKE

Did you know that famous soccer player, Lionel Messi, has a huge tattoo of his mother's face on his back? Rumor has it that he's so close to his mother, that if she doesn't like one of her son's love-interests, she will actually chase them off with a cast iron frying pan. He respects her so much that he doesn't seem to mind. Whether talking about successful men in sports, entertainment, or politics, many of them share one important thing in common: they respect and listen to their mothers.

Where we encounter King Lemuel today, his mama is sitting him down for a little talk. While we're not exactly sure who King Lemuel is, "lemuel" means "belonging to God", letting us know that this person was chosen by God to lead His people. I can only imagine a mother, sitting with her son, saying, "I know you're big and powerful, but come here,



Eternal PERSPECTIVE Proverbs

babe. We need to chat..." God had given this man authority, his mother wanted to make sure that he wasn't going to utilize his power to help him misuse sex and alcohol. As a king, he would have had access to any worldly pleasures. She knows that these temptations could zap his strength, and keep him from bringing about justice and honoring God's law.

As someone who has never struggled with alcohol or sexual sin, it would be really easy for me to skim past this section. Lemuel's mama isn't talking to me, is she? As a follower of Christ, I've been given freedom from eternal consequences of sin and the power to make a difference here on earth. Am I really going to use my freedom to misuse things like sex, alcohol, food, technology, social media, money, and other things that privilege has given me access to? Or am I going to use this freedom to spread the message of Jesus Christ and to help bring about justice? While the blood of Christ gives us eternal freedom from our sin, we need to take a close look at worldly things that could diminish our strength or limit our ability to witness God to people.

Lemuel's mama isn't the only one warning us to be mindful of letting worldly sin hinder us. Scripture reminds us over and over to let Christ rule in our hearts, not sin. Romans 6:12 says, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions." Hebrews 12:1 reminds us that, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us." We know that while we live under grace, not the fear of the eternal consequences of our sin, we know that abusing things like sex, alcohol, and other worldly things limits our power to bring justice and spread the Good News here on earth. I think it's only right that we listen to Lemuel's mama and take a close look at sin that could hinder us, striving to honor God in all that we do.

Questions:

1. Take a close look at yourself. What or who (other than Christ) have you allowed to control you? Are you giving sex, alcohol, food, social media, money or something else power over you?
2. Are you using your authority/freedom to indulge yourself or to follow God's law and serve others?
3. What is one step you can take towards freedom from worldly sin today? What subscription can you cancel, conversation can you have, or boundary can you put into place to help you use your "authority" as God intended?