# The Qualities of a Godly Mate

## Introduction

I once had a college professor who told of the most honest funeral sermon he had ever heard. The man who had died was a drunk, a failure as a father, and a miserable husband. Everyone listened intently to the words of the preacher, wondering what he could possibly say that was good about this drunkard. To their surprise, the preacher leaned over the pulpit and spoke directly to the widow. His message to her was clear and simple--"Don't make the same mistake twice!"

Many of the marriages in the Bible are less than ideal. Sarah, Abraham's wife, has always struck me as being cranky and bossy. Job's wife offered little comfort in the midst of his trials. In fact, it might have been considered a blessing for her to have been taken in one of the disasters that wiped out his children and his flocks.

One of the most pathetic marriages in the Old Testament is that of Abigail and her husband Nabal, described in 1 Samuel 25. She was wise and beautiful, while he was harsh and evil (1 Sam. 25:3). As his name indicated, he was a fool (25:25). I doubt that Abigail had much to say in the choice of this man as her husband. The tragedy of this marriage is turned around in the account recorded in 1 Samuel 25, however, for the Lord takes the life of Nabal and Abigail becomes the David's wife.

For the one unfortunate enough to have married a fool, Proverbs offers no promises of an easy life or a quick cure. The assumption throughout the book is that a person must live with his or her mistake in marriage. Divorce is never mentioned as the solution for a foolish decision concerning a mate. The picture painted of such a marriage is deliberately bleak.

One might think that the authors of Proverbs were somewhat cynical about marriage, having much more to say about its dangers than its delights. We must remember, however, that this book was written primarily to young men ("my son," cf. 1:8; 2:1; 3:1) who had not yet married. One purpose of Proverbs is to urge young men to consider their life's mate carefully, since the consequences of a wrong choice are both painful and permanent.

Marriage is the norm so far as Proverbs is concerned. The single life is nowhere presented as an alternative (such as Paul does in 1 Corinthians 7). Marriage is viewed as a divine institution, and it is God who gives a man a virtuous wife.

House and wealth are an inheritance from fathers, But a prudent wife is from the Lord (19:14).

A man's choice of a life's mate can be his making or his breaking. be either a delight or a disaster.

He who finds a wife finds a good thing, And obtains favor from the Lord (18:22).

It is better to live in a desert land, Than with a contentious and vexing woman (21:19).

A constant dripping on a day of steady rain And a contentious woman are alike; He who would restrain her restrains the wind, And grasps oil with his right hand (27:15-16).

The potential of a wife for good or evil is summed up in the words of this proverb:

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who shames him is as rottenness in his bones (12:4).

One purpose for dealing with the dangers of marriage is to warn those who would enter into marriage casually, without serious consideration of the consequences of their decision. When one enters into a marriage, he makes a vow, a vow which he is obligated to keep.

It is a snare for a man to say rashly, "It Is holy!" And after the vows to make inquiry (20:25).<sup>32</sup>

Most of us have already entered into the commitment of marriage. I would gladly marry my wife again, if I had it to do over. Many are not so fortunate. For those of us who are married, what does Proverbs have to teach us, since we have already made our choice? While we cannot retrace our steps, we can certainly strive to become the kind of mate which Proverbs holds before us as the biblical ideal.

Women may initially be distressed by the fact that Proverbs seems to emphasize the need for a young man to give thought to his choice of a wife, but gives no counsel to the woman about her choice of a godly husband. But this is to be expected of a king who is teaching his sons about the decisions they must make in the next few years of their life. We shall also see that Proverbs has much to teach young women about the kind of man they should marry. After all, if Proverbs is a book intended to teach young men how to become godly leaders, it has the fringe benefit of instructing young women about the kind of man to marry--a man who will become the godly leader of their home.

This study is intended to encourage those who have not yet married to make their choice carefully and on the basis of character. For those who are already married, we should not focus our attention on those areas in which our mate fails to measure up, but rather seek to better understand and apply what Proverbs teaches us about how to be a godly husband or wife.

The approach of this study will be to consider the various lines of evidence which give us a composite picture of the character of the godly mate. There are verses which deal directly with the husband and the wife. Some of them present positive character traits, while others are presented in contrast (e.g., the "contentious wife").We also have indirect instruction to consider. For example, Proverbs has much to say about the characteristics of a good friend, as well as warning us concerning those with whom we should not associate. It is my intention to consider these in order, that we might better understand those qualities which we should seek in a mate (if we are not yet married) and as a mate (if we are already married). It must be remembered as we consider the character traits of a godly mate that godliness can only be found in a maturing believer. Although an unbeliever and an immature

Christian may exhibit some of these characteristics, in the final analysis he cannot be a godly individual and therefore the single person must avoid him or her as a life partner. May God guide us in this crucial study.

## The Importance of Character Traits

In the Book of Genesis there is an interesting contrast between the selection of Rebekah as Isaac's wife (chap. 24) and Jacob's choice of Rachel, rather than Leah (chap. 29). Abraham sent his oldest and most trusted servant to select a wife for Isaac, within the guidelines he laid down (24:2-4). The test which the servant wisely devised (24:13-14) was one which revealed the character of the young woman--she would be a servant at heart, willing to give water to the stranger and his camels.

Jacob, on the other hand, chose a wife for himself. He was unwilling to marry Leah, the older daughter, even though that was the accepted custom in those days (29:26). Jacob favored Rachel over Leah, not because of her character, but because of her looks and her personality (29:17). Later developments seem to establish the fact that Leah was God's preference while Rachel was Jacob's. Leah outlived her younger sister, for example. Leah and her handmaid bore twice as many children as Rachel and her maiden. Leah bore Judah, the one through whom Messiah would come, and Levi, the leader of the priestly tribe. It was Leah who was buried in the cave of Machpelah, beside Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah (49:31), while Rachel was buried along the way to Bethlehem (35:19).

What Genesis teaches us in practice, Proverbs teaches us in principle--a man who would marry well will choose his life's mate on the basis of her character, not on the basis of her looks or her personality.

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised (31:30).

We shall now seek to discover the character traits of a godly mate.

## The Character Traits of a Godly Wife

Proverbs is most specific with regard to the qualities of the godly wife. These are highlighted by contrasting the moral flaws of a woman who is far from virtuous.

1. A GODLY WIFE IS GODLY. Godliness begins with a proper relationship to God. A godly wife is, first and foremost, a woman who fears God.

Charm is deceitful and beauty is vain, But a woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised (31:30).

In contrast, the woman to avoid is the one who does not know or fear God. She is sometimes referred to as a "strange woman," that is a foreigner, one who has no knowledge of the God of Israel (cf. 2:25; 5:3,20; 7:5). She is actively evil and has no grasp of the way of the Lord.

She does not ponder the path of life; Her ways are unstable, she does not know it (5:6).

To keep you from the evil woman, From the smooth tongue of the adulteress (6:24).

While perhaps not synonymous with a fear of God, the godly wife is referred to as virtuous or excellent (12:4; 31:10). This seems to describe the moral excellence of the godly wife, a result of her godliness.

2. A GODLY WIFE IS WISE. You will recall that wisdom is personified as a woman in the Book of Proverbs (cf. 1:20-33; 8:1-36; 9:1-6). So also the ideal wife is characterized as a woman of wisdom.

The wise woman builds her house, But the foolish tears it down with her own hands (14:1).

She opens her mouth in wisdom, And the teaching of kindness is on her tongue (31:26).

The opposite of the godly woman is the woman of folly.

The woman of folly is boisterous, She is naive, and knows nothing (9:13).

As a ring of gold in a swine's snout, So is a beautiful woman who lacks discretion (11:22).

3. A GODLY WIFE HONORS HER HUSBAND. A man who has married a godly wife has a wife who will bring honor to him. She is truly a helper to her husband.

An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, But she who shames him is as rottenness in his bones (12:4).

The heart of her husband trusts in her, And he will have no lack, of gain. She does him good and not evil All the days of her life (31:11-12).

An ungodly wife humiliates and harasses her husband. She is not a helper but a hindrance to her mate. She is "as rottenness in his bones" (12:4). By her haranguing, she makes him miserable:

A foolish son is destruction to his father, And the contentions of a wife are a constant dripping (19:13).

4. A GODLY WIFE IS GRACIOUS. One reason honor is given the godly woman is that she is known for her graciousness.

A gracious woman attains honor, And violent men attain riches (11:16).

The ungodly woman is spoken of in very unbecoming terms. She is vexing, due to her contentious nature:

It is better to live in a corner of a roof, Than in a house shared with a contentious woman (21:9; cf. 25:24).

It is better to live in a desert land, Than with a contentious and vexing woman (21:19).

5. A GODLY WIFE IS FAITHFUL TO HER HUSBAND. This is most clearly shown by contrast with the woman of folly who is an adulteress.

To deliver you from the strange woman, From the adulteress who flatters with her words; That leaves the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God (2:16-17).

To keep you from the evil woman, From the smooth tongue of the adulteress (6:24).

"Come, let us drink our fill of love until morning; Let us delight ourselves with caresses For the man is not at home. . . " (7:18-19).

While it is not stated explicitly, it is implied and assumed that a godly wife is one who maintains sexual purity. She is a woman who is virtuous or excellent (31:10), in whom her husband has complete trust (31:11). She does her husband only good and not evil (31:12). She teaches her son the virtues of sexual purity (31:3). Certainly she is a woman of sexual purity.

### The Character Traits of a Good Friend

Some may not realize that the traits of a good friend relate to the character of one's mate, but a little reflection shows why this must be so. The breaking of the marriage covenant is a sin against a companion, a close and intimate friend.

That leaves the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God (2:17).

The term rendered "companion" here is used elsewhere (cf. 16:28; 17:9; Ps. 55:13) for the closest of friends.<sup>33</sup> If my mate is not a friend, what is she? And yet some have foolishly chosen to marry one who fails to qualify even as a friend. We will briefly summarize the qualities of a good friend, considering also the characteristics of those with whom we should avoid associating.

1. A GOOD FRIEND IS FAITHFUL. Fair weather friends are numerous, and Proverbs mentions these (cf. 14:20; 19:4,6,7). But a true friend is a person who is still there even when the going gets tough.

A friend loves at all times, And a brother is born for adversity (17:17).

A man of many friends comes to ruin, But there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother (18:24).

Do not forsake your own friend or your father's friend, And do not go to your brother's house in the day of your calamity; Better is a neighbor who is near than a brother far away (27:10).

2. A GOOD FRIEND REBUKES US WHEN NECESSARY. There are things which may need to be said to a friend that are not easy to say. I am disappointed by the sentimentalism that pervades our friendships so that we flatter our friends when we need to frankly rebuke them. A true friend is the one who is honest enough to tell us what we need to hear, rather than to flatter us.

A man who flatters his neighbor Is spreading a net for his steps (29:5).

Better is open rebuke Than love that is concealed. Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy (27:5-6).

Why is it, then, that we seem to think that a wife should never criticize her husband? Is it not better to be corrected by our closest friend than by an enemy? Sometimes the kindest thing a wife can do for her husband is to tell him that his idea is absolutely ridiculous--in a gracious way, of course.

3. A GOOD FRIEND IS THOUGHTFUL AND TACTFUL. A good friend is sensitive to our needs and speaks in such a way that we are encouraged and enriched. His sensitivity is demonstrated in his understanding that gaiety and goodwill is not always appropriate nor appreciated. "It matters not only 'what' we say, but 'how,' 'when' and 'why' we say it."<sup>34</sup>

Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar on soda, Is he who sings songs to a troubled heart (25:20).

He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning, It will be reckoned a curse to him (27:14).

4. A GOOD FRIEND SHARPENS US. Not only do we need to be criticized when necessary, but sometimes we need to be probed or stretched in our thinking. A good friend does not allow us to become intellectually stagnant, but prods us on to higher and greater thoughts.

Iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens another (27:17).

A plan in the heart of a man is like deep water, But a man of understanding draws it out (20:5).

Isn't this true to life? Don't you seek to develop friendships with those who will challenge your thinking and present you with new avenues of thought? Why should one of these friends not be your mate?

5. A GOOD FRIEND OFFERS US WISE COUNSEL. Those whom we choose as friends should be marked by wisdom and thus have godly counsel to offer.

Oil and perfume make the heart glad, So a man's counsel is sweet to his friend (27:9).

Think back for a moment to the account of David, Nabal, and Abigail in 1 Samuel 25. David was angered because of the ungracious words of Nabal to his young men. He was determined to wipe

out every male in the house of Nabal (25:13,34). Abigail quickly formulated a plan to appease David's anger and then spoke words of wise counsel, pointing out how detrimental David's actions would be to his future rule as king (25:28-31). David's reply indicates his appreciation of the wisdom of her words:

Then David said to Abigail, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me, and blessed be your discernment, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodshed, and from avenging myself by my own hand" (1 Sam. 25:32-33).

I would simply point out that David was indeed wise to marry a woman who could offer such wise counsel. And we would do well to marry one who offers wise counsel as well. Why is it, then, that husbands seem to think that the biblical instruction concerning the submission of the wife to her husband precludes her offering him wise counsel, if offered tactfully and in a submissive spirit? Let us learn from David and Abigail.

While we should seek those with the above-mentioned qualities to be our friends, we must also shun those who have characteristics which would hinder our walk in wisdom. If we are not to associate with the following kinds of people, certainly we ought not to marry them either. Here are some character traits which would seem to disqualify a person as a partner in marriage:

#### 1. WE OUGHT NOT ASSOCIATE WITH A FOOL.

He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm (13:20).

Leave the presence of a fool, Or you will not discern words of knowledge (14:7).

## 2. WE OUGHT NOT ASSOCIATE WITH THOSE WHO HAVE AN UNCONTROLLABLE TEMPER.

Do not associate with a man given to anger; Or go with a hot-tempered man, Lest you learn his ways, And find a snare for yourself (22:24-25).

#### 3. WE SHOULD NOT ASSOCIATE WITH THOSE WHO ARE EVIL:

Do not be envious of evil men, Nor desire to be with them; For their minds devise violence, And their lips talk of trouble (24:1-2).

He who is a partner with a thief hates his own life; He hears the oath but tells nothing (29:24).

#### 4. WE SHOULD NOT ASSOCIATE WITH ONE WHO IS A REVOLUTIONARY.

My son, fear the Lord and the king; Do not associate with those who are given to change; For their calamity will rise suddenly, And who knows the ruin that comes from both of them? (24:21-22)

There are some who are always out to change things--society, government, other people. It is not wrong to try to improve things, but the revolutionary is more bent on removing than improving. The revolutionary wants change for the sake of change, not change for the sake of improvement. Incidentally, some seem bent on finding a mate who needs improving--a sort of life-long project. Proverbs does not recommend it.

# 5. WE SHOULD NOT ASSOCIATE WITH THOSE WHO HAVE NO CONTROL OVER THEIR APPETITES.

He who keeps the law is a discerning son, But he who is a companion of gluttons humiliates his father (28:7).

## The Character Traits of a Godly Child

Some time ago I was arrested by the words of the Centurion in the Gospel of Matthew:

"For I too am a man **under** authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, "Go" and he goes, and to another, "Come" and he comes, and to my slave, "Do this" and he does it" (Matt. 8:9, emphasis mine).

Up until this time I had always understood the Centurion to say that he was a man **of** authority, not a man **under** it. Perhaps this is some kind of euphemism. But I believe that it is a biblical principle (and one that is evident in life) that no man is fit for authority who has not learned to be subject to it. After all, even our Lord learned obedience (Heb. 5:8).

I believe that Proverbs teaches us that we can tell much about the character of a person by observing his relationship to his parents. Note these passages:

A wise son accepts his father's discipline, But a scoffer does not listen to rebuke (13:1).

A fool rejects his father's discipline, But he who regards reproof is prudent (15:5).

A wise son makes a father glad, But a foolish man despises his mother (15:20).

A foolish son is a grief to his father, And bitterness to her who bore him (17:25).

He who assaults his father and drives his mother away Is a shameful and disgraceful son (19:26).

Listen to your father who begot you, And do not despise your mother when she is old (23:22).

The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice, And he who begets a wise son will be glad in him. Let your father and your mother be glad, And let her rejoice who gave birth to you (23:24-25).

There is a kind of man who curses his father, And does not bless his mother (30:11).

All of these passages point to the fact that a good son is a godly man, and a godly man makes a good husband. Any man who is not a good son will not be a good husband.

There is one more proverb which has to do with parents. Frankly, I find it troublesome, but it informs us that we must seek to learn something of the home life of our mate before we marry him--or her:

Under three things the earth quakes, And under four, it cannot bear up: Under a slave when he becomes king, And a fool when he is satisfied with food, Under an unloved woman when she gets a husband, And a maidservant when she supplants her mistress (30:21-23).

There is a common thread which runs through each of these four unbearable situations--one gets something which he is unaccustomed to and which he will find difficult to handle once he has it. A slave has only known authority over him, yet when he becomes king his authority is absolute. His temptation will be to abuse his newly acquired authority. A fool would normally know only poverty and deprivation. With a full stomach he will hardly know how to behave. Certainly much of his incentive will be lost. A maidservant who now has authority over her mistress will be inclined to get even by making life miserable for her former mistress. She who once felt abused and oppressed will give her mistress a taste of oppression. So too with an unloved woman. Since she has never known genuine love, she may very well presume upon it and by trying to drink this new cup to the full make her husband regret the day he vowed to be faithful in his love toward her.

I realize that some of you have come from homes in which there was little or no love. You may wonder if this proverb condemns you to a life of loneliness. I think not. Certainly God's grace is sufficient for every need. But it should warn us that those who have not known love in their childhood years will have a tendency to abuse it in marriage. A mate who has not been loved by parents should not take this out on the marriage partner. And the one who marries a mate who has been unloved should be sensitive to the kind of problems such a childhood produces. The sins of the fathers (and mothers) are passed along, to later generations (Ex. 20:5).

Throughout the Book of Proverbs we have seen the teaching of the father and the mother, instructing and warning the child. Unfortunately, that is not the way every home operates. I am sure most of us are not entirely happy with the way we are raising our children. This means that we may learn a great deal about our mate by giving thought to the home environment in which he or she was raised. Proverbs implies that the influence of the home has a great deal to do with a child's success in life as a partner in marriage. Here is a factor we cannot afford to overlook.

## The Qualities of a Godly Husband

Initially it seemed that Proverbs had little to say to the woman who sought to discern the qualities of a godly husband. I have come to see that this is not at all the case. In general, we can say that a woman should seek a man who is wise. Since we have already studied the characteristics of the wise, we will only summarize them here. These seem especially applicable to marriage:

- 1. A wise husband is kind and compassionate (12:10).
- 2. A wise husband is honest (29:24).
- 3. A wise husband is hard-working (12:11; 27:23-27).
- 4. A wise husband is truthful (12:17,19).
- 5. A wise husband exercises self-control (12:15; 16:32).
- 6. A wise husband has a gentle tongue (12:18; 15:1-2,4).
- 7. A wise husband is generous (14:21; 28:27).

8. A wise husband is willing to be corrected (even by his wife) and listens to counsel (12:15; 15:12,31-32; 28:13; 29:1).

- 9. A wise husband is a man of integrity (19:1; 20:7).
- 10. A wise husband is faithful and reliable (17:17; 29:3; contrast 25:19; 31:3).
- 11. A wise husband is forgiving (19:11).
- 12. A wise husband is willing to admit he is wrong (28:13).
- 13. A wise husband is humble (15:25,33; 16:18-19; 18:12; 29:23).
- 14. A wise husband is not contentious, but a peacemaker (17:1; 18:1,19).
- 15. A wise husband has control of his temper (14:29; 16:32; 17:27; 29:11).
- 16. A wise husband is a man who avoids excesses (20:1; 23:20-21, 29-35; 31:3-9).
- 17. A wise husband has a concern for others, especially the poor and the oppressed (29:7).
- 18. A wise husband can keep a confidence (17:9; 26:20).
- 19. A wise husband fears God and is obedient to His Word (13:13; 14:26; 16:20; 28:25; 31:30).
- 20. A wise husband is not a jealous man (27:4).

21. A The wise husband has a positive outlook on life (15:15; 17:22; 18:14).

As I look at these characteristics of the wise I am reminded of the qualifications laid down by the apostle Paul for elders and deacons in 1 Timothy 3.I find a great similarity between the qualifications for church leaders and the characteristics of the wise in Proverbs. But should this

come as a surprise? After all, isn't Proverbs written to young men who will be leaders, instructing them about wisdom? In this sense 1 Timothy 3 only summarizes what Proverbs has taught in greater detail.

### Conclusion

For prospective mates the implications of this message should be obvious. Your choice of a life's partner should be made on the basis of character, not charm or outward beauty. In general, your mate should manifest the characteristics of one who is wise. More specifically, a godly husband or wife will not be the kind of person with whom Proverbs warns us not to associate, but will evidence the qualities of a good friend. Anyone who chooses to disregard the teaching of Proverbs on marriage will live to regret it.

I find it distressing to admit that much of the force of the warnings of Proverbs concerning marriage has been nullified by a fact of 20th century Christian life--divorce has become an acceptable alternative to an unhappy marriage, even among Christians. Even Christians do not tend to heed the warnings about a contentious mate because they believe that if their marriage does not work out they can simply walk away from their commitment and try again. That, to me, is a very sad commentary on contemporary Christianity.

Why is it that our teaching on marriage, divorce, and remarriage differs so greatly from that of our Lord? If you will recall, it was the Pharisees who asked Jesus if it was lawful for a man to divorce for any cause at all (Matt. 19:3). Our Lord's answer to this question was to emphasize the rule, not the exception, and therefore the stress was on the permanence of the marriage union (19:4-9). The response of the disciples of our Lord is significant: "If the relationship of the man with his wife is like this, it is better not to marry" (19:10). Our Lord did not correct this conception, but confirmed it (19:11-12), and in so doing demonstrated His agreement with the teaching of the Book of Proverbs. Let us be careful to seek to preserve the purpose of God for marriage and not to promote the exceptions. In preserving the permanence of marriage we will once again be able to urge men and women to choose their mates carefully, and then to live in such a way as to keep their marriage vows.

There is also a lesson for us to learn from Proverbs about the matter of personality. I believe many Christians are more concerned about their personality than their character. Worse yet, I fear that some have tended to confuse or equate the two. Some women tend to think that the ideal husband and spiritual leader is the one with the "salesman-type" personality--he is outgoing, aggressive, and assertive. Some women who are married to men who have a less aggressive nature are tempted to look down on their husbands because they are not domineering enough.(They should talk to some of the women who have the assertive husbands.) Some men think that the ideal "submissive" wife is the woman who is shy and passive. In both cases, personality has been confused with character. God is not nearly as concerned with our personality as He is with our character. Aggressive men are not necessarily better leaders, and certainly they may not be more godly leaders, nor are passive women necessarily more submissive. Let us learn that our character is far more important than our outward beauty or our personality. Is this not what Peter was teaching the women, who are often more sensitive to outward appearance?

And let not your adornment be external only--braiding the hair, and wearing gold jewelry, and putting on dresses; but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God (1 Pet. 3:3-4).

In Proverbs we are told that charm (personality?) is deceitful and that beauty is vain (the NIV says "fleeting").Our personality may be deceptive, for we may be both charming and spiritually carnal. And beauty is temporary, but character is eternal. Let us seek to be godly.

As parents, we need to teach our children to seek godly character, for themselves, and in those with whom they would associate. We must teach them, by word and deed, the permanence of the marriage commitment and the delights of marriage when both partners seek to honor God in their marriage. We need not look far for the many examples of failures in marriage and the disastrous consequences for all.

There are those reading this message who, for one reason or another, may never marry. There are reasons for this, some of which are commendable (cf. 1 Cor. 7). Let me simply say that the qualities of a good mate are also the qualities of a godly man or woman. Just as not all men will be a elders or deacons in the church, yet every Christian should strive to meet the qualifications which are laid down for those who would hold such offices (1 Tim. 3); so godly character is befitting every Christian. Let us seek it for ourselves, and encourage other believers to seek it also. And let us demonstrate to the lost that godliness and wisdom are worth the cost, and are available only to those who fear the Lord.

32 Cf. also Numbers 30:2; Psalm 15:4.

33 Derek Kidner, The Proverbs (Chicago: Inter-Varsity Press, 1964), pp. 49-50.

34 Ibid., p. 166.

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