Proverbs 31:11 - Beautiful Truth is Beautiful Trust

Pictured is a unique flower called, "Beautiful Truth". It was discovered in South Korea by Song Kihun (the grower) who named this rare beauty after his beloved daughter. Although extremely delicate in appearance, with its strap-like petals that are only a 1/4" thick, it is a very hardy and well behaved flower...unlike others of its species. This is one of the distinct qualities that make this exceptionally beautiful flower so treasured by its gardeners.

As I happened upon this photo, I marveled at the design of this flower. I'd neither seen nor heard of it before. The petals look like delicate ribs that wrap around the "heart" of the flower where the sweet nectar is. It reminded me of Proverbs 31:11, *"The heart of her husband trusts in her, and he will have no lack of gain."*

This little flower interested me enough that I began looking up its history, how it grows, where it grows, and if it'll grow in *my* garden. To my joy, in my research, I found it is much like a biblically submissive woman: beautifully delicate in appearance, yet is very strong and hardy, and well behaved; all of which, blesses her Gardener.

I don't know if many of you garden, but prior to my illness, I used to garden all the time and absolutely loved it! I've learned some of my greatest lessons from the Lord while I was gardening and have had some of the most humbling, awe-inspiring and sweet quiet times with my Creator that I will treasure for the rest of my life.

One of the lessons God taught me while gardening was that the gardener knows all his/her plants the best! The gardener knows which plants he/she planted, which ones are weeds (but just look like plants to passer-byers), which plants need much water, little water, more sun...well, you get the picture. And the gardener also knows *exactly* when each plant needs to be pruned!

I remember when I first pruned one of my plants; I thought I did something wrong because a white milky substance began to flow out of it. I was afraid and began to pray and asked God to help me "fix" my mistake. This is when I learned I hadn't made a mistake, but that the plant was "bleeding" and it was okay, because it would heal. I pruned and pruned until my plant looked nearly dead...but I, the gardener knew it wasn't. It was ugly, had no shape, and well, looked like it should be pulled up because it looked so useless...but I knew better. I even had a couple of people offer to pull it out for me because they thought it was dead!

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I didn't think it looked as ugly as other people did. I actually thought it looked quite beautiful. I could see what it was going to be as it matured. I could see large, emerald green leaves that danced around the abundant and exquisitely fragrant flowers. I envisioned the multitude of radiant and vibrant blooms that would fill the bouquet so that those who passed by just couldn't help but stop and take in the essence of its invigorating fragrance.

They'll stand there thinking, *"It looks like an ordinary flower, but there's just something about it...the soothing, sweet aroma; the extraordinary vibrant hue of its petals—what is it? I can't put my finger on it, but I can't help but be attracted to its subtle, yet extravagant beauty."*

It's during these times I catch someone and run outside with my flower clippers and offer to cut some for them to take home. When they talk to me about my garden, and why they were attracted to it, I share with them that it's all for Christ. I tell them that I want everyone who walks by my house to sense the inexplicable serenity and joy that comes from knowing Christ. I consider my garden as a "bait" to catch some "fish" so I can share the Gospel.

I've met many friends this way and have been exceedingly grateful for the garden God has generously allowed me to work and enjoy.

So what does all this have to do with Proverbs 31 verse 11? Well, as I looked upon this unique flower, I thought of why a husband's heart would have such trust in his wife that he would have no lack of gain. And it's all wonderfully wrapped in this flower.

A biblically submissive wife is like this Beautiful Truth flower. She's delicate in appearance, but is very hardy and strong. She grows without being overbearing and she doesn't compete with the other flowers in the garden, that is, she doesn't compete or compare herself with other women (2 Cor 10:12). She is well behaved, practices self-control (Titus 2:3-5) and is shaped by her Gardener and grows in the fashion *He* chooses.

She doesn't mind being pruned, though it is painful, and causes her to "bleed", because she trusts her Gardener is pruning her to help her grow more fragrant and vibrant. The pruning actually makes her stronger (Hebrews 12:11). She doesn't mind looking "ugly" (being in humiliating circumstances) from time to time because her full trust is in her Gardener— not in herself or others (Gal 1:10, 2:20).

She's more concerned with the growth that's happening in the secret places no one else but her Gardener can see. And this gives her peace, especially when the storms come and beat down on her or during the droughts when the sun threatens to dry up all she has. Whether the torrential rains stamp out her dreams, or the heat of adversary sap her strength, her roots grow deeper and deeper into the soil, as she firmly embeds herself into her strong Foundation—the Lord Jesus Christ; for she knows, He alone is her Refuge (Prov 18:10).

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No wonder the heart of a husband who's blessed with this kind of wife has full trust in her and has no lack of gain. He trusts her because he knows she will not gossip about him to others (1 Timothy 5:13), his interests are hers, his desires come before hers, and his welfare is her joy (Ephesians 5:24, Philipians 2:3-4).

She does not squander his money, nor look upon others with envy. She is fully satisfied in the LORD (1 Tim 6:6-8). She is grateful and humbled that God has been mindful of her and provides for her every need and even graces her with plenty (Ruth 2:10). Though her husband may or may not strive to be a man who loves her as Christ loves the Church, her husband does not worry, because he knows her full trust and joy is in Jesus Christ, not in him or any other person. Therefore he is free to know Christ (if he's not saved), and one day, will endeavor to love her as Christ commanded all husbands (Eph 5:25-31, 33, Col 3:19, 1 Peter 3:7).

Her husband is well aware that he is her second love and Christ her first. She is firmly established in her Savior alone and therefore is not easily shaken by circumstances around her, for her hope is in the LORD, not in the comforts of this life (Psalm 16:8-9).

She is fully aware that her Father God is compassionate, sovereign and trustworthy and does all things for her good, by using all things, whether trials or pleasures, conforming her daily into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Romans 8:28-29).

She makes her mark in this world and many take notice of her. Not because she is the most beautiful, not because she is the loudest, proudest or strongest. No, she is well esteemed because she allows her good conduct to prove her work done in the meekness of wisdom (James 3:13) with gentleness and a quiet spirit; faithfully doing good without fear of anyone or anything except God her Father (1 Peter 3:4 , 6). And yes, even others of her kind (other women) take notice of her, for her peaceful joy and quiet confidence in Christ, speaks louder than any words that could come from her lips.

Wow! I can't wait to be a woman like that! Can you?

Gracious Lord God in Heaven, hallowed be Your holy name! May all praise and glory be to You and You alone, because You alone are worthy Father! My sisters and I were once far off. Our hearts were darkened and we were vile, wretched souls before Your eyes. But in Your mercy, You looked upon us with compassion and You sacrificed Your one and only Son, that we may enter Your presence without shame and fear of condemnation. Because our hope is in You alone, You heard our cry for help and You saved our souls by washing us in the blood of Your holy Lamb, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Make us women who will not be tossed by the waves of society or any pretentious thought that sets itself up against You. But let us captivate every thought and make it obedient to Your Son. We commit to humble ourselves and submit to our husbands today to demonstrate the fullness of our trust in You. Receive our praise and grant our request O Lord, for You alone are our Provider and our First Love! May the name of Jesus Christ forever be praised, in whose name we come. Amen.

Praying for all of you dear sisters!

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Biblical Perspective, Practically Applied:

1. Memorize, mediate and study Psalm 16:8-9 by using a reference Bible and reading all the verses/passages that pertain to these two verses.
2. After you've studied Psalm 16:8-9, in your journal, make a two column list labeled: *What My Heart Is Set On*. Title the first column: "Things of This World" (e.g., kids, friends, husband, food, invitations, social status, etc.) and the second column, "Things of God" (prayer, Bible reading, Bible study, accountability, self-discipline, etc.). You must be honest or this exercise won't benefit you. Don't make your list based on the person you *think* you are or should be. Make your list based on who you *really* are…*right now*. Remember, Jesus said only the truth can set you free and will enable you to live in the freedom of faith that Christ died to give you.
3. Re-read "The Wife and The Rib" and journal what the woman was made to "protect" in a man. Then write "Self-Discipline Challenge" and jot down *one* thing you're resolved to work on *this* week (i.e., nagging, criticizing, belittling, speaking ill of him to your kids, etc.) so you can be that "rib" your husband desperately needs. And don't forget to find a Scripture verse/passage to strengthen and sustain you through your self-discipline challenge.
4. Read Psalm 103:8-14 and thank God for knowing we are merely dust and find peace and refreshment knowing that God doesn't expect you to be perfect; He knows you can't be. That's why He sacrificed His one and only Son to be the propitiation for our sins (Heb 4:17).

   Pray and ask God to help you to mortify your pride and cultivate humility so that you might become the beautiful and precious woman He created you to be. Then take a deep and comforting breath, and trust God who called you to Himself—knowing *He* is faithful to complete the good work He began in you, from the day of your salvation to the Day of Christ (2 Tim 2:13, Philippians 1:6).

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