

# I MARRIED WONDER WOMAN...

**NOW WHAT?** *A SUPERHERO'S GUIDE  
FOR LEADING AND  
LOVING THE  
PROVERBS 31 WIFE*

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**Standard**<sup>®</sup>  
P U B L I S H I N G  
*Bringing The Word to Life*

Cincinnati, Ohio

FROM MR. INCREDIBLE TO MRS. INCREDIBLE:

***YOU ARE MY***  
**GREATEST ADVENTURE—**  
**AND I ALMOST MISSED IT.**

*THE INCREDIBLES, 2005*

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# INTRODUCTION

**PERHAPS YOU’VE SEEN THE LOFTY DESCRIPTION OF THE EXCELLENT WIFE FOUND IN THE SECOND HALF OF PROVERBS 31.** It has challenged (and aggravated) women for centuries and given men a sort of checklist for the ideal spouse. A kind of Wonder Woman for her time.

Remember the comic-book heroine Wonder Woman? She was the Amazon Princess Diana who came to defend America against the Nazis in the 1940s, and to do it in a costume less than one-third of what any male superhero wore. Let me tell you, the show created from the comic-book series made for must-see TV in the 1970s, starring Lynda “How-DID-you-get-that-costume-on?” Carter. She played a mild-mannered army secretary to the pearly toothed Major Steve Trevor (Lyle Waggoner from the *Carol Burnett Show*), and cleverly disguised her statuesque good looks with (you guessed it) glasses and a

hair bun. But remember, Superman had already proven that people were unobservant dupes who could be fooled by some ten-dollar frames and a little Brylcreem. Never mind that he wore a size 68 jacket, with a 38-inch waist. So why couldn't an Amazon princess hide her six-foot-plus frame, long raven hair, and piercing blue eyes behind a pair of flat-lensed glasses and an olive-drab uniform? (All serious superheroes had raven hair and blue eyes until 1962 when auburn-haired Peter Parker swung into action as Spider-Man.)

Today, *wonder woman* is a euphemism for an active, strong woman in any arena. But the fact is, the comic-book character never took on the really hard stuff; she could only type 120 words a minute and save America—she never tried to manage a household and live a godly life. Wonder Woman 31 from Proverbs truly does it *all*—home management, business development, real estate, culinary arts. She's decisive, analytical, detailed, rational, kind, caring, socially adept, and godly—a wife, mother, employer, business owner. But the comic-book heroine and today's wonder woman do have two big things in common. First, sometimes we pearly toothed hunks can't see past their clever disguises. And second, they rarely get the credit they deserve.

My guess is that, over the centuries, this Proverbs heroine has been unfairly used by some men (me!) as a framework to criticize their spouses—pointing to their shortcomings rather than encouraging their progress. In doing this myself there’s something I have come to see behind these verses, even with my own myopic X-ray vision. They subtly reveal a man I was not familiar with—not just a lucky guy who ended up with Supergal. Someone more appropriate for her—someone I wanted to know.

If you haven’t ever read about the woman in Proverbs 31, or if it’s been a while, read it, and then ask yourself this: What on earth would that kind of woman see in a man like me? And what kind of a superman would I have to become to keep ahead of a wife like this? Obviously, every characteristic that applies to the woman in this passage may not apply to your wife today. Then again, maybe you are blessed with a spouse exactly like her. In any case, we husbands can encourage our wives on their Proverbs 31 journey in the best way possible: by being worthy of them. This is my personal, untrained, didn’t-go-to-Bible-college interpretation of what Christ did for his followers: **“For their sakes I sanctify myself” (John 17:19)**. I set myself apart for her benefit, not only my own.

The greatest catalyst for change the Holy Spirit has ever used in my life is my wife. Though she would balk at the pedestal I put her on, she inspires me to be a better man. Like the T-shirt I once read—“I’m their leader. Which way did they go?”—I scramble to lead and encourage the “little (wonder) woman.” Far from being intimidated by her, I am eager to give my wonder woman a man she can call her hero.

Throughout the course of this handy guide, I’ll pass on twelve indispensable items you’re going to need in your utility belt for loving and leading the Proverbs 31 Wonder Woman for a lifetime. If you practice each of these principles, you’ll be well equipped for whatever challenge or adventure comes your way. So tighten your cape, and let’s swing into action!



**AN EXCELLENT WIFE,  
WHO CAN FIND?  
FOR HER WORTH IS  
FAR ABOVE JEWELS.**

**PROVERBS 31:10**

UTILITY  
BELT

ITEM



# VALUE YOUR WIFE ABOVE EVERYTHING

## **I MARRIED MY WIFE BECAUSE I COULDN'T IMAGINE EVER FINDING HER EQUAL.**

I was in love, and I was also impressed. Her value was so clear that there was no way I was going to let her get away if I could do anything about it. I began with the perspective Adam had toward Eve when he first laid eyes on her: *Wow!*

Long red hair, a natural, earthy style, and mischievous brown eyes that said, *If you can't take a joke, you're going to regret ever meeting me.* I certainly didn't know God's will for my life the first time I saw her, but I thought I knew *my* will for my life. As Wayne said of Cassandra in *Wayne's World*, "She will be mine. Oh yes, she will be mine."

**Proverbs 18:22 states, “He who finds a wife finds a good thing and obtains favor from the Lord.”** God’s plan is to bless us men through this good thing. I had no doubt that this young lady was a very good thing! And just having her would be favor enough.

I spent time getting to know her while keeping my true identity as Super Smitten Man a secret. I spent a lot of time praying for God’s direction and, of course, blabbing to anyone else who’d listen and hopefully mention my fondness to her. It seemed that every time we were around each other, her value to me grew.

In fact, I had seven years to confirm that she was valuable, as she mostly ignored me. Well, *ignored* may be too strong: the thesaurus says *disregarded, overlooked, or bypassed* would be equally descriptive. Just pick one. The point is, I finally caught her. The details of our courtship are relatively unimportant, since every couple has their own story, but eventually, I got her. The compliment of my life was that she traded all her other options (and they were numerous) for me. Like her new title “Mrs.”, I felt like I deserved a prefix too—something like “The Amazing,” “The Incredible,” or “The Fantastic.”

A strong beginning like I practiced is not terribly unusual though, and many men proudly show off their catches. Unfortunately however, over time we men often fade in our enthusiasm as other things compete for our attention. Our “good thing” becomes part of the everyday scenery, and values become relative. Not intentionally usually, and not because the good thing has stopped being good in itself. But life is sneaky—you have to watch it every minute or stuff happens. Stuff that makes you go to counseling and sit there with your arms crossed, trying to sound like you’re not the one with the problem. Stuff that ends marriages, with each side certain it was the other’s fault.

We get distracted rather easily from pursuing our spouse’s full potential. It’s like investing in a house, expecting it to appreciate, but never spraying for termites, painting, roofing, and doing all the other smart things. Then one day, surprise—you’re the one bringing down the neighborhood property values. Sort of like the guy in Luke 14 who started a project he couldn’t afford to finish and was ridiculed for poor planning. That scenario is just as possible in our marriages if we stop seeing the value of continuing to invest in our wives.

A husband of the Proverbs 31 variety guards against any loss of esteem for his wife. He finds ways to refresh the perspective he had when he first proposed. Not the spark, not the fire, not the chemistry, or any other combustible romantic metaphor, but the value. Value by definition is enduring. And it can be enhanced.

If you think you may have lost a little wonder of your woman, don't panic. But don't just sit there either. The fix is relatively un-mysterious: reevaluate the worth of things according to Scripture and maturity. Now, if you don't at least own a Bible, you will be at a disadvantage here. This is where all transcendent things and all temporal things are categorized and explained. (If your wife knows why you want to read it, I'll bet she'd go out in a blizzard to get you one.)

Once you've looked for a while at what God values, you'll begin to see your own choices differently. All of them.

Sometimes it's a tough lesson to discover that **“what this world honors is an abomination in the sight of God” (Luke 16:15, NLT)**. This means some of my personal treasures might need to go. The things that God honors need to show up in my choices.

# **TOP TEN THINGS THAT MIGHT SPELL A SUPERHERO'S UNDOING! (AND YOURS TOO!)**

- 1. KRYPTONITE (or other crippling substance)**
- 2. SELF-PITY FROM BEING MISUNDERSTOOD**
- 3. INABILITY TO HOLD A STEADY JOB**
- 4. LEADING A DOUBLE LIFE**
- 5. TEMPTING WORKPLACE ROMANCE**
- 6. ASSUMED INVINCIBILITY**
- 7. SHUNNING TEAMWORK**
- 8. A PARTICULAR FEMALE VILLAIN**
- 9. ANGER OR FRUSTRATION OVER INNER TURMOIL**
- 10. BITTERNESS FROM LACK OF APPRECIATION**



So if the value Christ placed on the church is any indication of how a husband is to see his wife (Ephesians 5:25), then clearly the things that compete for my wife's rightful spot should be dealt with ruthlessly and heroically.

Scripture is, of course, the foundation for truth and value, but after that comes just plain growing up. Maturity brings a different perspective and changes what we value for the better. Unfortunately, age doesn't equal maturity. There are way too many fifteen-year-old souls running around in fifty-year-old bodies. And I know this comes as a shocker, but even having the Holy Spirit isn't a guarantee of mature thinking, or else we wouldn't know so many Christians we'd never invite to dinner. Maturity, as far as I can tell, is a series of decisions over time. Some we make under outside pressure. ("Happy birthday, son! You're twenty-six today. Please move out.") Some we make because a lightbulb goes off in our heads. ("If Dad isn't going to raise my allowance to \$450 a week, I guess I need a job.") But decision making and taking responsibility for our actions is the formula for maturity, no matter the stimulus. Remember what Uncle Ben told Peter Parker? "With great power comes great responsibility." And he didn't even know Peter was Spider-Man! He was just talking

about growing up. We as men have been given great power. We forget this only because it sometimes lies untapped beneath a big pile of potential.

The good news is that your wife is just waiting to respond; the far-above-jewels woman in her will come out all the more. Interesting isn't it, the comparison is to jewels, since they are most valuable in their final, polished form? What a foolish thing to ignore the value of a diamond, even if it's still in the rough!

**THE PROVERBS 31 HUSBAND GETS HIS VALUES IN  
ORDER AND MAKES SURE HE GUARDS HIS MOST  
VALUABLE TREASURE.**



**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.**

**PROVERBS 31:11, 12**