

May 2018

Dear Friends,

*Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. <sup>11</sup> The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. <sup>12</sup> She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. <sup>13</sup> She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. <sup>14</sup> She is like the merchants' ships; she bringeth her food from afar. <sup>15</sup> She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, ...<sup>20</sup> She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. <sup>21</sup> She is not afraid of the snow for her household: for all her household are clothed with scarlet. <sup>22</sup> She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple. <sup>23</sup> Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land. <sup>24</sup> She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant. <sup>25</sup> Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come. <sup>26</sup> She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness. <sup>27</sup> She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. <sup>28</sup> Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. <sup>29</sup> Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. <sup>30</sup> Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. <sup>31</sup> Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."*

**Proverbs 31:10-31**

I am rich.

If the writer of the Proverbs is to be believed (and he certainly *is* to be believed), I am rich beyond measure. First and foremost, I have been blessed to find a woman of great virtue to be my wife. I discovered another virtuous woman in my wife's mother. That makes two. I also had two wonderful grandmothers who added great blessing to my life, which brings the number to four. I have also had three more virtuous women as sisters and a beautiful aunt who has faithfully served me as a godmother. Eight. Add to that, numerous other aunts, cousins, teachers and friends. The increasing number becomes too great to count. And then of course, there is my own mother whose value to me only increases with years. Are all of these women perfect? No. But they are women of great virtue that have been a blessing to me and to many others. Indeed, I have been most blessed, and I am rich.

The writer of Proverbs 31 is named King Lemuel, whose name means "dedicated to God." Historically, it is not clear who this might be. However, it is possible that "Lemuel" was a pseudonym for either King Hezekiah or King Josiah. If so, then the responsibility of his mother was not only to raise a son, but also to help raise a king to serve God's people. Therefore, it is most fitting that the writer of Proverbs 31 details the blessing of finding a woman whose "*price is far above rubies.*" Her calling would not only be to serve her son, but also her God.

The great discovery is not only in finding the virtuous woman, but also realizing how she became virtuous. "*Her children arise up, and call her blessed*", indicates that virtue does not come by human will or effort, but by the hand of God. When I reflect upon how the heart of my father trusted in my mother (v.11), I ponder the work of my God. When I see my wife lovingly taking care of our children and looking "*well to the ways of her household*"(v.27), I am witness to the divine work of our heavenly Father, who loves His Creation so much, that He gave His own beloved Son to redeem it and make it new.

May God grant us grace to never take the holy calling of the virtuous woman for granted, but instead, be evermore thankful to Him and for them. They are just a few of the abundant blessings that God has given us through Christ our Lord. God bless you!

*"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ...<sup>7</sup> In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace..."*  
**Ephesians 1:3,7**

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Chuck Bylkas



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*In honor of Aunt Linda Wirkkala's birthday*

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### **SPRING SEMESTER WRAPING UP**

The Spring semester will soon be over and plans for classes this fall are being made. If you are interested in learning more about taking classes either on line or in person, please contact the seminary by emailing [cilseminary@ilseminary.com](mailto:cilseminary@ilseminary.com) or call (906) 482-3337.

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While this is an excellent strategy, it has proven a challenge for us to actually meet the minimum funding requirements. Until now, the fund has existed but remained unfunded. By the Lord's grace we have been blessed with a large contribution to fund the Inter-Lutheran Seminary Endowment Fund. We would love to build on this generous contribution to grow our endowment into a major source of ongoing seminary support.

Although the seminary still needs the financial ongoing regular contributions of our supporters, please consider the endowment fund for your planned giving needs. The seminary has chosen the InFaith Community Endowment Fund (the renamed Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation) to administer our endowment fund. They will provide experienced legal advice to help guide you with any contribution questions done through estate planning in addition to lump sum contributions, IRAs, property and securities. For more additional information, please contact Kirk Otto, Jr. at (715) 294-4343 or Cheryl Hendrickson at (906) 482-3337.

