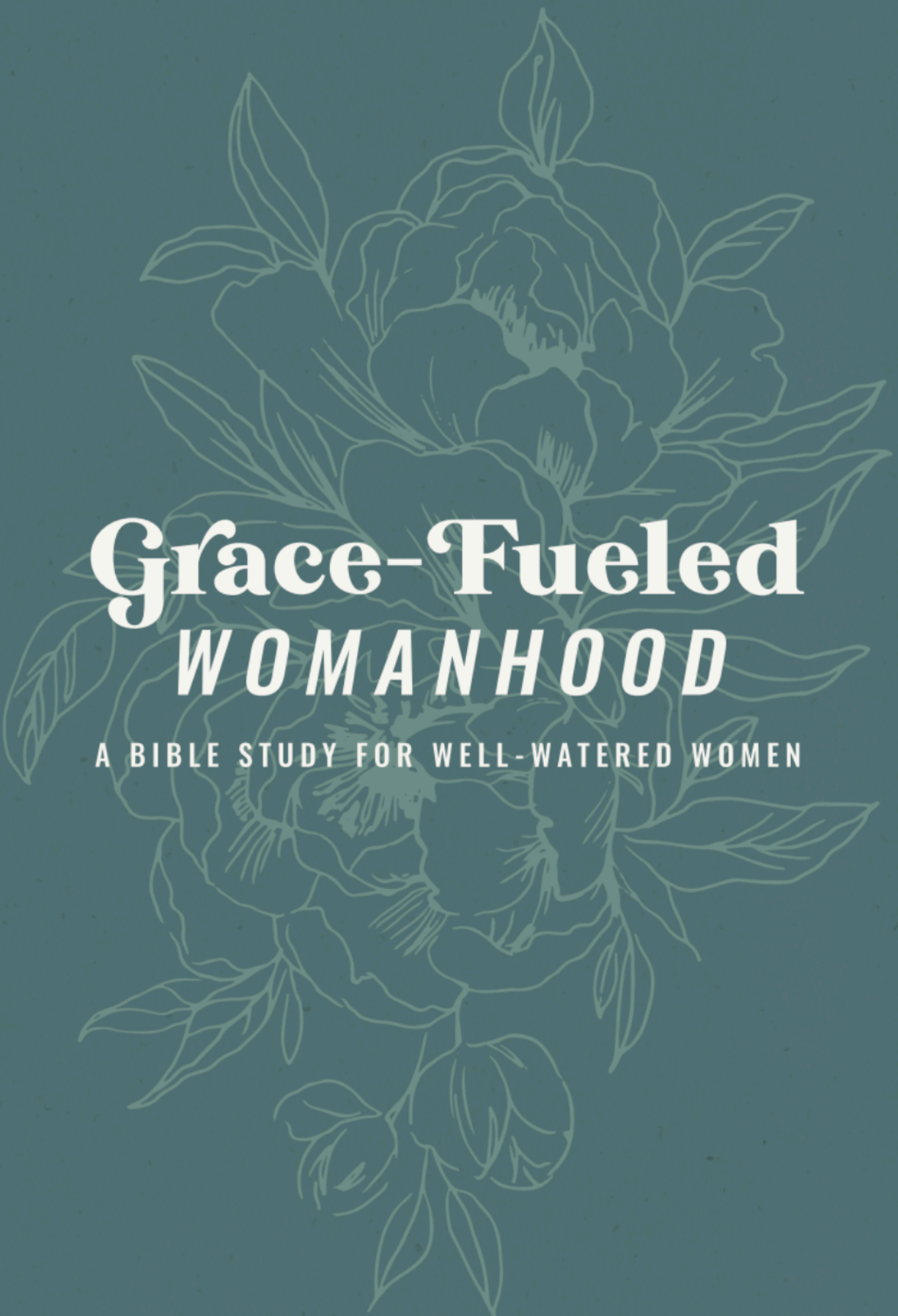




Grace-Fueled *WOMANHOOD*

A BIBLE STUDY FOR WELL-WATERED WOMEN

meet the authors BEHIND GRACE-FUELED WOMANHOOD



Gretchen Saffles is the founder of Well-Watered Women and the author of *The Well-Watered Woman: Rooted in Truth, Growing in Grace, Flourishing in Faith*. She is passionate about encouraging and equipping women to drink deeply from the well of God's Word, and she longs to see women grasp the fullness of the gospel in everyday life. Gretchen loves going on adventures with her husband and three kids, traveling to new places, daydreaming of wildflower fields, baking chocolate chip cookies, painting, reading good books, and teaching women to know and love Jesus. On any given day you can find her with a cup of coffee in hand, a message stirring in her soul, and a God-sized dream in her heart.

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Lauren Weir is the Content Editor at Well-Watered Women. She is also a wife and mother with a heart that beats to communicate the goodness and glory of God. Her love for God's Word and discipleship led her to pursue a Master of Biblical Counseling degree from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, and she utilizes her training to both counsel and teach within her local church. Before joining Well-Watered Women, she was co-owner of Words Worth Noting, a ministry dedicated to providing biblical resources and cultivating life through the beauty of Scripture.



a woman who
fears the LORD
is to be praised.
Proverbs 31:30

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by Gretchen Saffles, Maggie Combs, and Lauren Weir



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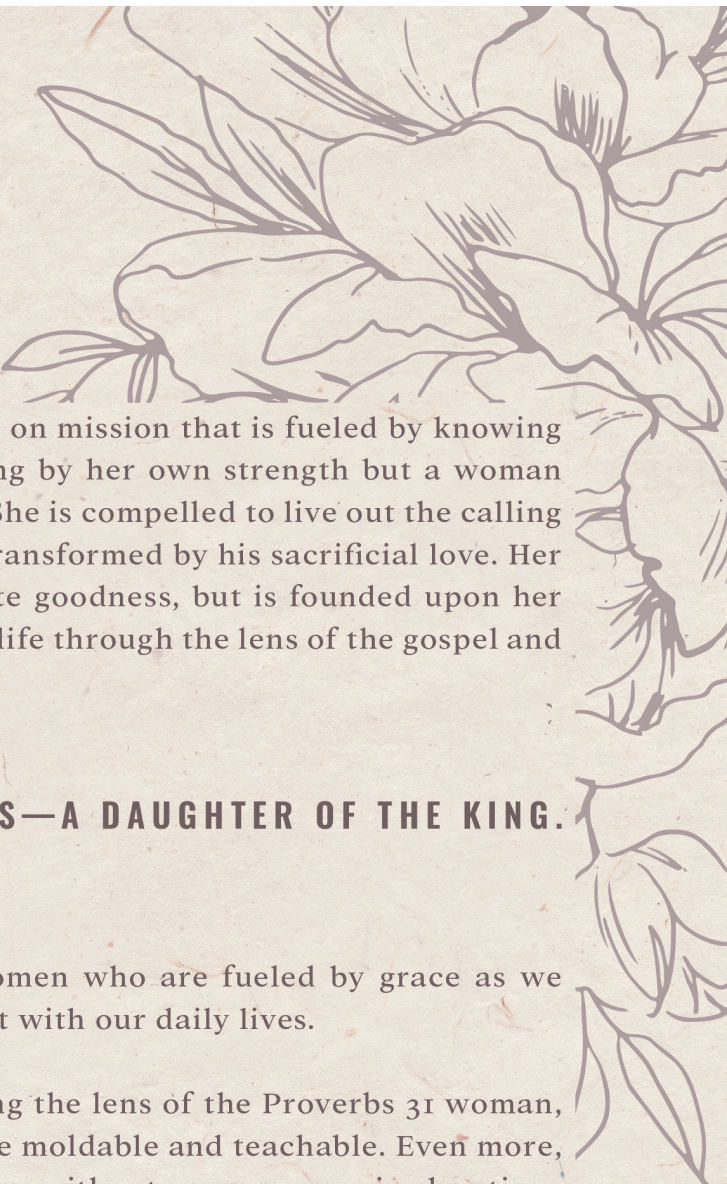
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The Proverbs 31 Woman: Who Is She?

Infamously known as the woman we all strive to be but can never quite measure up to despite all our striving, the Proverbs 31 woman has often been misunderstood, misapplied, and misconstrued. She's always been the woman in the Bible who made me feel like I couldn't measure up. When I would read about her, the first words that came to mind about myself were "not enough." If we look at this virtuous woman as a standard of perfection, a box to fit into, or a goal to live up to, we fall short. She isn't meant to be the barometer of our godliness. Instead, she is a picture of how a wholehearted pursuit of God impacts our daily lives.

The Proverbs 31 woman is often set as the standard for being a "good" Christian woman, wife, and mother. However, this description of a virtuous woman does not have to be a stumbling block or a hindrance, but rather an example of a life fully devoted to God. Each verse was inspired and breathed out by God to be a source of hope and illumination for us (see 2 Tim. 3:16–17). The Proverbs 31 woman is not a check-list to be marked off each day; she is a portrait of a woman whose life is wholly abandoned to God. She is not a destination we are trying to reach; *she is an example of a life that fears the Lord and a portrait of grace-fueled womanhood.*

The descriptive words the speaker uses in each verse are like brushstrokes pointing to our need for the gospel. With the swish of the brush, a portrait is composed of what a life that has been wondrously changed from sinner to saint through the blood of Jesus looks like. She is a woman after God's own heart and her actions are the direct overflow of her adoration. Awe leads to action. What holds our hearts captive will shape the outcome of our lives. Ultimately, these verses call us to shift our focus from ourselves to our Maker, who is worthy of praise.



These verses are a glimpse into a life on mission that is fueled by knowing her Savior. This isn't a woman toiling by her own strength but a woman whose life is fueled by God's grace. She is compelled to live out the calling of God because her heart has been transformed by his sacrificial love. Her virtue stems not from her own innate goodness, but is founded upon her awe of a Holy God. This woman sees life through the lens of the gospel and lives with the big picture in mind.



SHE KNOWS WHO SHE IS—A DAUGHTER OF THE KING.

Because of Jesus, we too can be women who are fueled by grace as we proclaim the gospel and honor Christ with our daily lives.

As we study women of the Bible using the lens of the Proverbs 31 woman, my prayer is that our hearts would be moldable and teachable. Even more, I pray that we would study and learn without any preconceived notions holding us back and that we would be radically changed by the gospel that never changes, but always changes us.

Because of Christ and his perfect and precious promises, we can be grace-fueled women.

enfolded in his grace,

Gretchen Saffers

week two

SHE IS FAR MORE
PRECIOUS THAN JEWELS



week two, day one: THE CHASE

“An excellent wife who can find? She is far more precious than jewels.”

PROVERBS 31:10

Read Proverbs 31:10–31. What is the main idea of Proverbs 31:10?

Hayil, the Hebrew word translated “excellent,” means valiant. How does that provide new meaning to the verse?

Hayil is also used in Proverbs 12:4. Read this verse and write down what it says about the valiant wife.

The Proverbs 31 woman often feels like the perfect woman, an impossible standard for today’s Christian woman to measure up to. Social media and magazines offer a portrait of another woman for us, perfect by worldly standards. Depending on what kind of information we consume, we may each have a different portrait of what it would look like to be perfect, but they’re equally fleeting. Running after perfection muddies our view of ourselves and God and thwarts our understanding of our true value in Christ.

Life can feel like a casting call for the perfect woman. We strive to make ourselves worthy. We’ll be measured and found wanting and face shameful rejection from those we aspire to impress. Our identity gets trampled on when we hear those words we fear the most—“not good enough.” But this is not the story of judgment for those who are in Christ. When we stand before God as Holy Judge, Jesus stands before us with his nail-scarred hands, pointing to his work on the cross as the payment for our sins. Jesus is the “good enough” we could never be. He is the “more than enough” we innately desire.

HE IS PERFECT, AND WE ARE HIS.



week two, day one: THE CHASE

Purchased by his blood. Transformed into a new creation. Granted a new name and new identity. Made perfect in Christ. Given every excellent promise of Scripture. Deemed worthy of a new purpose and eternal destiny. This is who you are as a follower of Christ. You are no longer a part of the casting call of this world; you are a part of the family of God (1 John 3:1–2).

This is where the story of the Proverbs 31 woman begins, with God's work of grace and redemption in her life.

What is the difference between excellence and perfection?

How does a life of excellence differ from a life that strives after perfection?

In the Old Testament, the word “valiant” is used to describe a strong warrior.⁵ The valiant wife of Proverbs 31:10 is no weak woman. Rather, she is a woman of fortitude and courage. She is a virtuous and noble warrior because she is a daughter of God—the King of kings. Her worth exceeds the value of rubies and precious jewels. She is made in the image of God, and she has inherent value and dignity. She is a woman of excellence, not perfection. She knows who she is in Christ and allows that knowledge to transform her actions.

DAILY SANCTIFICATION

Just as a ruby looks like a lump of coal when it's found deep beneath the earth's surface, you must experience the chisel and scrubbing brush of God's loving discipline to become what you already are in Christ (Heb. 12:6). After much intricate work by a trained jeweler, the lump transforms into one of the most expensive jewels in the world.

Becoming a rare jewel takes time, and it requires submission and surrender on our part. When we allow God to shape us and mold us, often using a chisel that pokes and prods at the depths of our heart, we become a precious jewel. The chisel and the scrubbing brush are the loving tools of God that shape us into valiant women who reflect his glory in every facet of our lives.

week two, day one: THE CHASE

Look up the definition for sanctification and write it here in your own words.

Write down what you learn about sanctification in each of these verses:

2 CORINTHIANS 3:18

1 THESSALONIANS 4:3–7

1 THESSALONIANS 5:23

2 THESSALONIANS 2:13

2 TIMOTHY 2:21

Sanctification is the process of becoming more like Christ as we put off the flesh and put on our new self in him. Earthly children are both born like their parents and grow more like them by living in relationship with them. When we are adopted into the family of God, we become more like our Father by spending time with him.

Read Hebrews 12:5–11. Who does God discipline?

What fruit is produced by God's loving discipline?

A grace-fueled woman joyfully submits to the leading of the Holy Spirit through this painful process of growth.

She does not balk at God's discipline, but receives it with joyful willingness. She sees the beauty that is to come and looks to Jesus on the cross for her comfort. She no longer stands in the line of the casting call of this world; instead, she stands before the cross admiring the Savior who bore her shame. As God works in her life, the peaceful fruit of righteousness is produced. She is a daughter of the King, and by that relationship, she is changed.

If you are in Christ, the same is true for you. Jesus took *your* place on the cross. Because of his blood that was shed, you can now become one of God's rare, priceless jewels. You are his daughter. Now become more like what you already are in Christ.





ask & apply

How is God chiseling at your heart in your current circumstances?

Do you have trouble believing that you are a rare jewel in the eyes of God? In what ways does Satan cause you to doubt the beauty of your story and your worth? How can you fight these lies with the truth of God's Word?