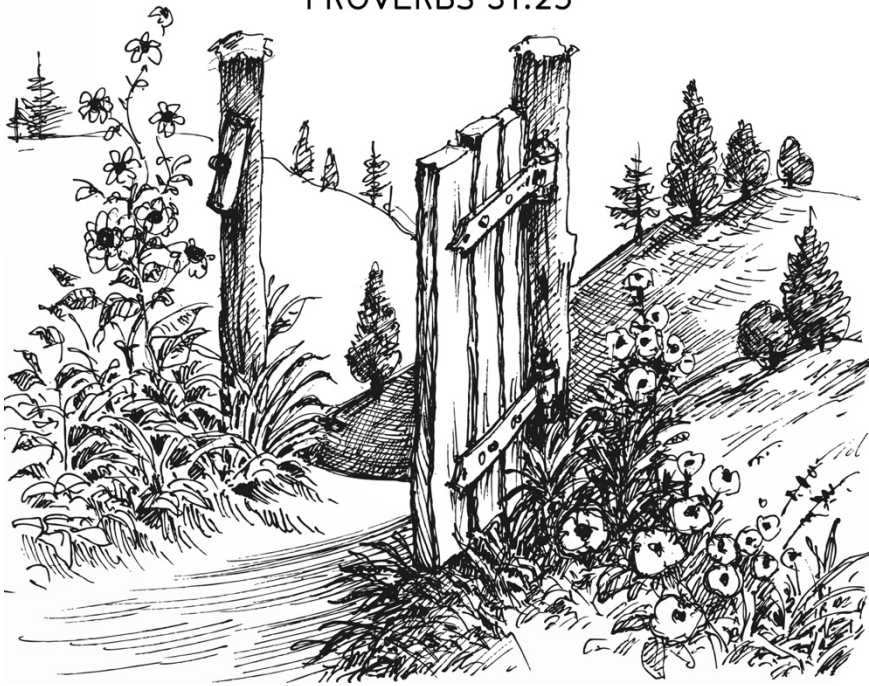


SHE IS CLOTHED WITH  
*Strength & Dignity*

SHE CAN LAUGH AT THE  
DAYS TO COME.

PROVERBS 31:25



## CHAPTER 4

# *She is Resilient*



SCRIPTURE FOCUS: MATTHEW 16, LUKE 1

One afternoon, my son walked into the house with a butterfly and asked me if he could put it in the freezer. Apparently, this is a thing. No offense if you're a butterfly collector—I'm not, and so this was all new to me. I couldn't bear the thought of sitting in a warm house while this beautiful creature spent the rest of its life in a deep freeze, and so we set it free and turned our attention to finding cocoons and watching the birth of new life.

It turned out to be a great teaching tool as I was able to show him the struggles that come with transformation. He learned that butterflies aren't born with wings. They earn their wings by going through the grueling process of giving up who they were for who they want to be.

That's what this chapter is about, which is why I chose the word "resilient." It's the ability to adapt to difficult or stressful situations, emerging stronger on the other side. Clothed with strength and dignity, we're being transformed into the image of Christ.

In Romans 12:2, Paul talks about the transformation process when he says, "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing, and perfect will." His words remind us that true and lasting change comes by allowing the Holy Spirit to transform our minds and hearts.

This process of transformation is not always easy. It may require us to let go of old ways of thinking and behaviors that no longer serve God. It may also challenge us to grow and stretch in new and unfamiliar ways, but the rewards are worth fighting for, as they enable us to align our hearts and minds with God's will for our lives.

Can you think of anything that you have given up in your pursuit of Christlikeness?

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While the transformation of our minds by the Holy Spirit is an ongoing process, it's also the first step to changing ourselves because it's the foundation upon which all change is built. Our understanding of God and His will for our lives will influence the way we interpret our experiences, and how we respond to our challenges.

## SHE TRUSTS IN GOD'S POWER

Most often, the stress that we experience isn't so much the problems we have, as the way we interpret them. The way we interpret the world is greatly dependent on our perception of God, which is why we need a clear understanding of Who He is. What is your perception of God, and what is it based on?

When it comes to the Lord, go straight to the source. Dig into His Word, and if you have trouble understanding it, dig deeper yet. Jeremiah 29:13 says, "You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart."

A virtuous woman might not have the ability to solve her problems, but she has faith in the One Who does. She knows that every broken piece of her life is safe in the hands of her Savior and Lord.

What does Ephesians 3:20 tell us about the power of God? Write it in your own words.

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Her faith is the funnel through which everything flows: the way she treats her husband, the way she raises her children, and the way she presents herself to the outside world.

She knows that God specializes in miracles. He replaces the stench of death with life and gives hope where all hope is lost.

She knows that He searches her soul, and provides for her in ways she could never provide for herself. She knows that the King of Kings and Lord of all Lords is directing her steps and planning her days.

She allows the Holy Spirit to transform her by the renewing of her mind and her adherence to God's Word.



## **SHE SETS HER MIND ON THINGS ABOVE**

One of the best examples of transformation is found in the New Testament, as we see Peter transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit from a mere fisherman to a bold and faithful leader of the early church.

When Jesus told His disciples about His impending suffering and death in Matthew Chapter 16, Peter rebuked Him, saying, "Never, Lord! This shall never happen to You!"

Jesus responded by saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

While Peter believed that Jesus was the Messiah, he wasn't ready to accept the reality of what He was saying. Like many of us, Peter was holding on to a preconceived idea of who Jesus was. With the infilling of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts, Peter's life was transformed, and he became a bold and effective witness for Christ, spreading the message of the gospel.

I've heard people say over time, "My God wouldn't do this," or "My God wouldn't do that." What they're saying is that they're choosing to worship their idea of God instead of accepting Him as He's revealed in His Word. It's easy to slip into this mindset if we're not grounded in faith—to lean on emotion instead of God's truth. And so, Jesus is telling Peter to change his perspective by setting his mind on the things of God.

*"Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things."  
(Colossians 3:2)*

If we hope to be an effective witness for Christ, we must be willing to challenge our beliefs, assumptions, and expectations, as we align them with God's will. By doing this, we can cultivate a steadfast and unwavering faith that will guide us in our pursuit of virtuous living.

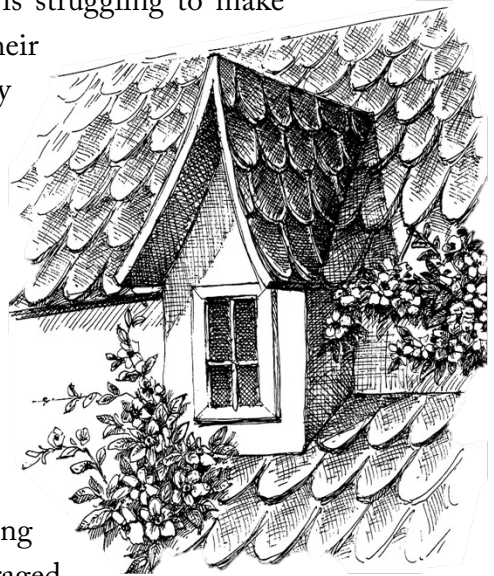
## SHE LAUGHS WITHOUT FEAR OF THE FUTURE

Our view of God is vital as it impacts the way we approach life's challenges. For example, if a couple is struggling to make ends meet, they might view their financial difficulties as an opportunity for growth and learning. With a mutual pursuit of God's will, they are more likely to engage in open and honest communication and pray together as they seek out solutions to their financial challenges.

On the other hand, if their faith is weak, they may see this challenge as an insurmountable obstacle that's meant to hold them back. Feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, and discouraged, they are more likely to give up on their marriage as they give in to the schemes of the enemy.

Therefore, it's important to cultivate a positive and hopeful perspective, grounded in truth and rooted in faith. By doing so, we can approach the future with resilience and determination, knowing that God is leading the way.

What does any of this have to do with The P31 Woman? When we see how a healthy and holy perspective changes the way we view the world, we can understand the driving force behind this virtuous woman. We can clearly see how she was able to face the future in the positive way that she did, and understand what made her so resilient and strong.



Proverbs 31:25 says, "She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come."

What does it mean to laugh at the days to come, or as the King James Version says, "without fear of the future?" It means that regardless of what the future may hold, or how difficult you may perceive it to be, you're able to find joy and contentment because of your faith in God's plan.

Can you think of a time in your life when your view of God improved the way you perceived a difficult situation? How did your understanding of God help you?

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## SHE SEES GOD AS POWERFUL AND PRESENT

In our last Bible study, *Slaying Giants: Finding Your Courage and Conquering Fear*, we talked about the 12 men in Joshua Chapter 13 that Moses sent out to spy on the land of Canaan. We saw that their perception of God directly affected the way they perceived their ability to overcome the enemy and take the land that God had promised them.

Of the 12 men that Moses sent out to spy on the land of Canaan, only Joshua and Caleb were confident that they could take the city. They saw God as powerful and present, and they were confident that with His help, they could overcome the enemy.

The other 10, however, were fearful because they failed to recognize the power and strength of God, who would surely lead and protect them. When we see God as powerful and present, we move forward in faith, and like The P31 Woman, who laughs without fear of the future, we have the confidence and courage to find joy in difficult situations.

*God laughs at his enemies because  
He knows who He is. And His  
daughter laughs at her trials, both  
known and unknown, because she,  
too, knows her God.*

*- Tessa Thompson,  
Laughing at Days to Come*



When I'm in a good place with God, I find myself saying things like, "Thank you for this trial," and "It's all in your hands, Lord!" at the end of a difficult day. I wouldn't be able to say those things if I didn't trust that He had my best interests at heart, or if I didn't think that He has the power and wisdom He does.

In Matthew 13:31-32, Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches."

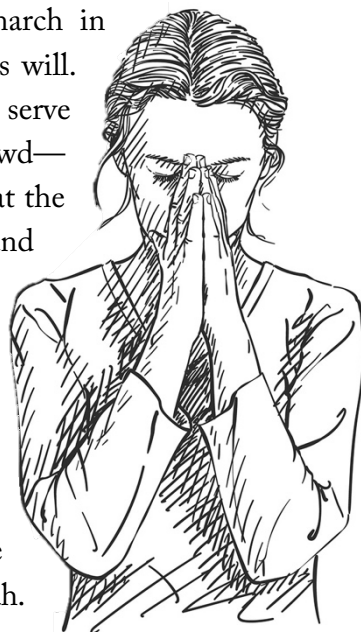
If you've never seen a mustard seed, imagine a small round seed about the size of a pinhead. It's one of the smallest seeds that a person can plant, but when it grows it has the potential to reach heights up to 8-12 feet. And so, what He's saying here, is that even though faith may seem small and insignificant at first, it has the power to grow and become a source of strength and shelter in our lives. Just as the mustard seed grows into a large tree, our faith in God can grow and become a powerful force, changing the way we react to situations and enabling us to persevere through difficult times.

## SHE IS STRENGTHENED BY HER UNDERSTANDING

I've been a Christian for over 45 years. During that time, I've met countless believers—some strong in the faith, others not so much, but every once in a while, there's one that stands out from the crowd. A woman with faith so contagious, there's no dimming her light. These are The P31 Women. The ones who march in lockstep with Christ, aligning their lives with His will. Women who take the initiative to seek God and to serve Him. They don't go with the flow or follow the crowd—they're swimming upstream. They're not looking at the world for guidance; they're seeking the Lord and making decisions in line with His will. In doing so, they cultivate an unshakeable faith.

These women are rare and precious in God's sight. They inspire us to grow in our own faith and to follow their example. One such woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus. She was a young girl who faced incredible challenges and risks when she accepted God's call to be the mother of the Messiah. She demonstrated a virtuous and faithful spirit that we can learn from today.

Despite the difficulties she faced as a young virgin who was unexpectedly with child, Mary remained steadfast in her belief and trust in God's plan. At that time in history, being pregnant out of wedlock was met with severe social stigma and condemnation, but despite any challenges she faced, Mary found joy and contentment because of her faith in God's plan. In other words, "she laughed without fear of the future."



What are some of the potential struggles Mary could have faced as an unwed mother? See John 8:3-5 & Matthew 1:18-19

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Read what Mary says in Luke 1:46-55,

*"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has*

*helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."*

Mary's response to the news illustrates how a woman's perception and understanding of God can influence the way she approaches difficult situations or trials in her life. As you read her words, notice how Mary is strengthened by her understanding of God. Her faith is shaped by what she has heard about God and the great things He has done.

Read that passage again, writing down some things that Mary knew about God that may have influenced her perspective on the situation.

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What does Romans 10:17 say? Write the verse out here:

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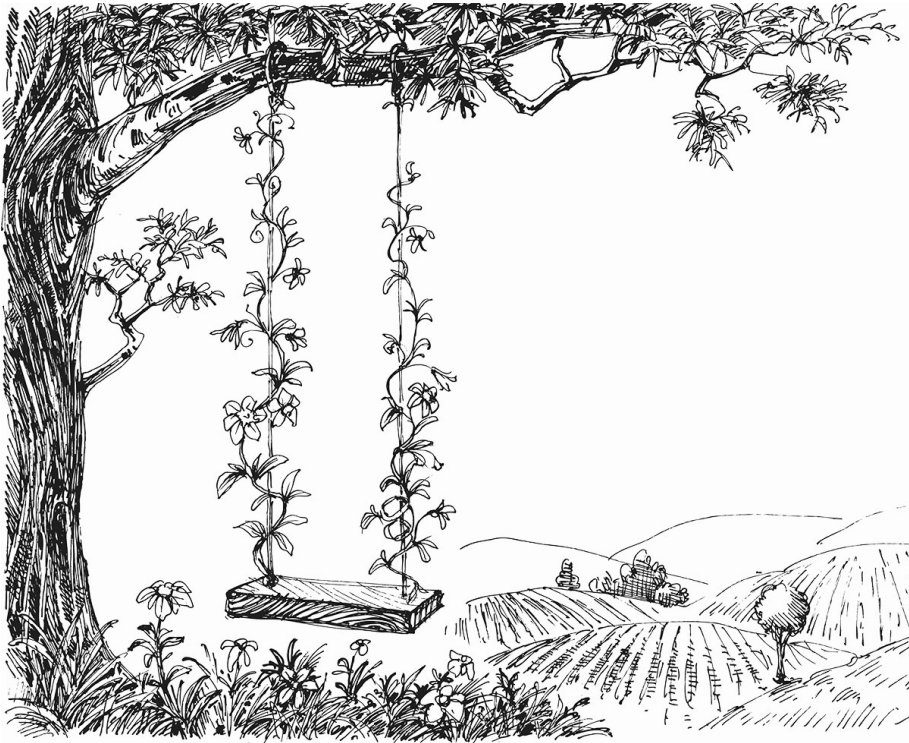
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## **SHE IS ON A FIRM FOUNDATION**

The best way to deepen our understanding of God is by studying the Bible. In doing so, we learn about His character and faithfulness. We develop a new perspective on the world. A growing understanding of God changes the way we interact with the world around us. It influences the choices we make as we align our actions with His will.

The foundation of our faith is what gives us the ability to stand tall and face challenges head-on, no matter how difficult they may seem. The ability to keep going, even when everything around us seems to be falling apart. The ability to face the future with joy and peace, knowing we're safe in His capable hands.



Faith is the root that anchors the soul. It gives us the strength to face challenges with grace and poise. It helps us maintain a sense of peace and well-being when everything seems to be falling apart. It gives us the ability to endure and persevere through difficult times, and it helps us find meaning and purpose in life.

*"They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." (Jeremiah 17:8)*

# The P31 Challenge

Are there any areas in your life where you tend to give up easily or give in to fear?

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What specific habits or practices can you adopt from The P31 Woman to help you bounce back from challenges and setbacks?

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