

PROVERBS 31:27, NIV



CHAPTER 3

She is Disciplined

SCRIPTURE FOCUS: LUKE 10:38-42

5 minutes. That's all it took to unload the dishwasher, hang up a sweater, and put the garbage away. 300 seconds. And now, I'm feeling a little bit lighter as I sit here writing this book. Isn't it funny how a stack of bills, a pile of dishes, or a basket of laundry can weigh down the soul? If you're anything like me, you put off these simple to-dos telling yourself that you'll do them later.

I'll pay the bills tomorrow.

I'll do the dishes in the morning.

I'll fold the laundry when I have time.

Will you really have more time tomorrow than you do today? Is a sink full of dishes and yesterday's food something you want to wake up to? And if you have kids, does running late in the morning because you didn't do laundry the night before make sense to you? I'm speaking from experience here. I've put things off for tomorrow more times than I care to admit: last minute taxes, a

sink full of dishes, running around in the morning looking for mittens when I knew days ahead that there would be snow.

And why do I put these things off? It's not because I don't have an extra 5 minutes to spare. More often than not it's because I've wasted the time that I've had. Whether I'm flipping through channels, scrolling through page after page on my phone, or answering texts, I'm distracted by too many things.

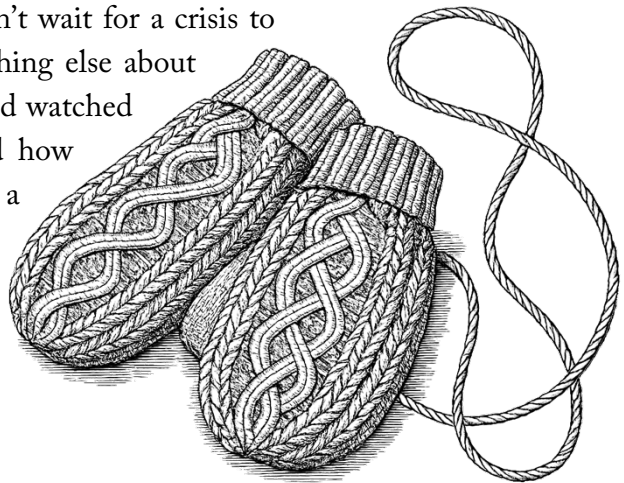
SHE LIVES TODAY WITH TOMORROW IN MIND

The Bible tells us,

Go to the ant, you sluggard consider its ways
and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or
ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer
and gathers its food at harvest.

— Proverbs 6:6-8

Do you see the wisdom in that? They're acting today with tomorrow in mind. In other words, they don't wait for a crisis to get moving. And here's something else about ants: if you've ever sat down and watched them, you might have noticed how locked in they are. If they drop a load, they pick it up again. If they hit an obstacle, they find another route. They keep going like this until the job is finished.



Their behaviour is rich in lessons on discipline:

- They're locked in on what needs to be done
- They keep going until the job's finished
- They persevere in spite of the obstacles that stand in their way
- They live today with tomorrow in mind

You won't see a P31 Woman running around on a cold morning desperately looking for mittens and scarves, because she's prepared for the cold days ahead.

When it snows, she has no fear for her household;
for all of them are clothed in scarlet.
— Proverbs 31:21

SHE'S A MODEL OF VIRTUE THAT'S MEANT TO INSPIRE

Now, before I go on about how perfect this woman is, and how imperfect we are, this is a good place to pause and remind you that the P31 Woman is not an actual person—she's an ideal. In other words, she's a model of virtue that's meant to inspire—not a checklist to measure your worth. No one is that flawless day after day.

Look at it more as a lifetime of growth—not a single season of perfection. Will you do your dishes every night before bed? Will you pay your bills before they stack up? Will you fold your laundry instead of leaving it sit? Maybe not every day, but you'll keep growing as you walk with the Lord. Little by little, He shapes our habits, our priorities, and even our desires. That's the beauty of Proverbs 31—it calls us forward, not to perfection, but to progression. It's a process of learning, adjusting, trying again, and staying focused. Just like a disciple follows a teacher day by day, we follow God's lead.

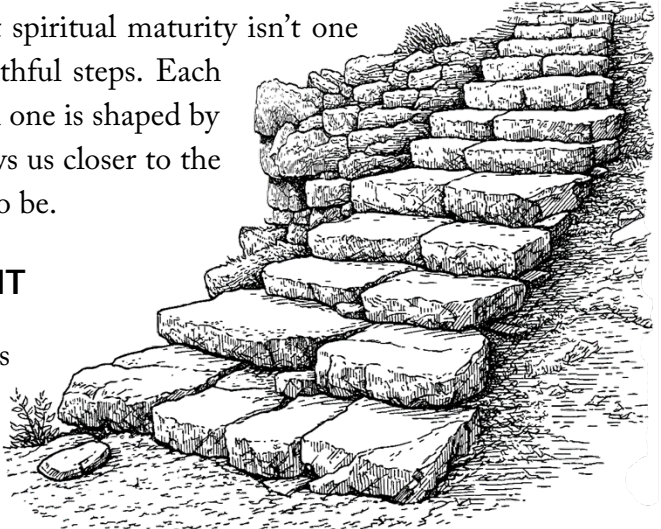
In 2 Peter 1:5–6, we read:

For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness.
—2 Peter 1:5–6

Peter is showing us here that spiritual maturity isn't one giant leap—it's a series of faithful steps. Each one depends on the last. Each one is shaped by the Spirit. And each one draws us closer to the kind of woman God calls us to be.

SHE'S LED BY THE SPIRIT

The word *disciplined* comes from the same root as *disciple*—a learner, someone who lives the way she does on purpose. As a disciple, she learns from Jesus and lives with intention. As she responds to His lead, her discipline begins to take shape in specific ways. These qualities don't appear overnight, but they grow as she walks with the Lord:



1. A trained will
She doesn't just react to life; she responds with intention. Her choices are shaped, not random.
2. Consistent habits
Discipline shows up in routines—her faithfulness, her work, the

way she manages her time, her home, her words. It's steadiness over time.

3. The ability to say yes and no wisely
Self-discipline isn't about being rigid—it's about knowing what matters. She says yes to what builds her up and no to what drains or distracts her.
4. A life shaped by purpose
A disciplined woman isn't led by impulse or emotion alone. She's guided by her priorities, by the Word, and by the Spirit.

The term is 'self-discipline,' and yes, we do play a role in this virtue, but only so much. You see, we don't produce the power to act—we respond to it. If discipline depended entirely on us, we'd live in a constant cycle of trying harder, failing, and feeling discouraged. But God never intended us to live that way. Philippians 2:13 tells us that it's "God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose."

You know the verse that says God will give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4)? It's not pointing to a magic genie that's granting a wish. It's talking about the transforming work of the Holy Spirit within us.

When we soak our souls in the presence of God, the things we once chased lose their pull. Little by little, He shapes our desires, so they line up with His. And this is where true discipline grows.

It isn't the stiff, white-knuckled version we often imagine. It's the kind that comes from a heart that's being transformed—strengthened, steadied, and led by the Spirit of God. When our hearts are aligned with God's will, we see that self-discipline isn't about enforcing a set of rules, it's a response to the work of the Spirit within us.

This is why Paul reminded Timothy, "For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline" (2 Timothy 1:7). Notice the order: power, love, and then self-discipline. A P31 Woman doesn't manufacture these qualities by grit alone. She draws from the Holy Spirit living within her. Her discipline grows out of God's power and His love at work in her life.

2 Peter 1:5-6

Peter places self-control between knowledge and perseverance. How does that order help you understand the way these three qualities work together in a believer's life?

Proverbs 31:10-31

What actions or habits in these verses reveal that the P31 Woman lives with intentional discipline?

SHE FOCUSES HER ENERGY

Some days I'm so overwhelmed with 'to-dos' that I can't keep my thoughts straight. I want to get it all done, but I don't know where to start. So I tell myself, If I multitask, I'll catch up. But the more I juggle, the less grounded I feel. Before I know it, the TV is on, the laptop is open, I'm answering texts with one hand and stirring a pot with the other.

Over time I've realized that this isn't the best way to live—or the best way to get things done. What we often call 'multitasking' is usually just switching quickly from one task to another. And every time we switch, we lose focus. We have to reorient, remember where we were, and get our minds back on track. That constant switching wears us down and leaves us less productive, not more.

Now, I'm not saying you can't listen to the Bible while you fold laundry or chop vegetables. Some things can pair together just fine. What I'm talking about is that scattered way of life where we're never fully present. Our hands are in three places while our minds are somewhere else. We answer people without really listening. We read Scripture without slowing down to take it in. We move through the day reacting instead of choosing—until we're busy, but not steady. Real discipline isn't doing more at once; it's choosing what matters most and giving it your full attention.

And so, the Bible tells us,

Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls
with toil and chasing after the wind.
—Ecclesiastes 4:6

Think of your attention like a flashlight in a dark room. Sure, you can wave it around quickly and manage to light up everything for a split second, or you can point it at one thing and really see it.

That's what focus looks like: choosing where to shine your flashlight, and how to hold it still.

SHE IS SITTING AT HIS FEET

And this is where Mary and Martha step into the picture.

In Luke 10, Martha is busy getting everything ready. The house. The meal. The details. Scripture says she was “distracted by all the preparations that had to be made” (v. 40, NIV).

Let's be clear: Martha's work was important—God calls us to serve others, and in doing so there's work to be done. In fact, if you look at that story in the context of the entire chapter, you'll see that it follows the parable of the Good Samaritan. Jesus had just finished making the point that serving is important work.

The problem wasn't *what* Martha was doing.

It was *how* she was doing it.

We're told she was distracted, worried, and upset about many things. In other words, her inner flashlight was jumping from dish to dish, task to task, expectation to expectation—until frustration bubbled over.

“Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do
the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

—Luke 10:40

Many of us live right there. Loving Jesus, serving people... but secretly we're exhausted, stretched thin, and running low on peace.

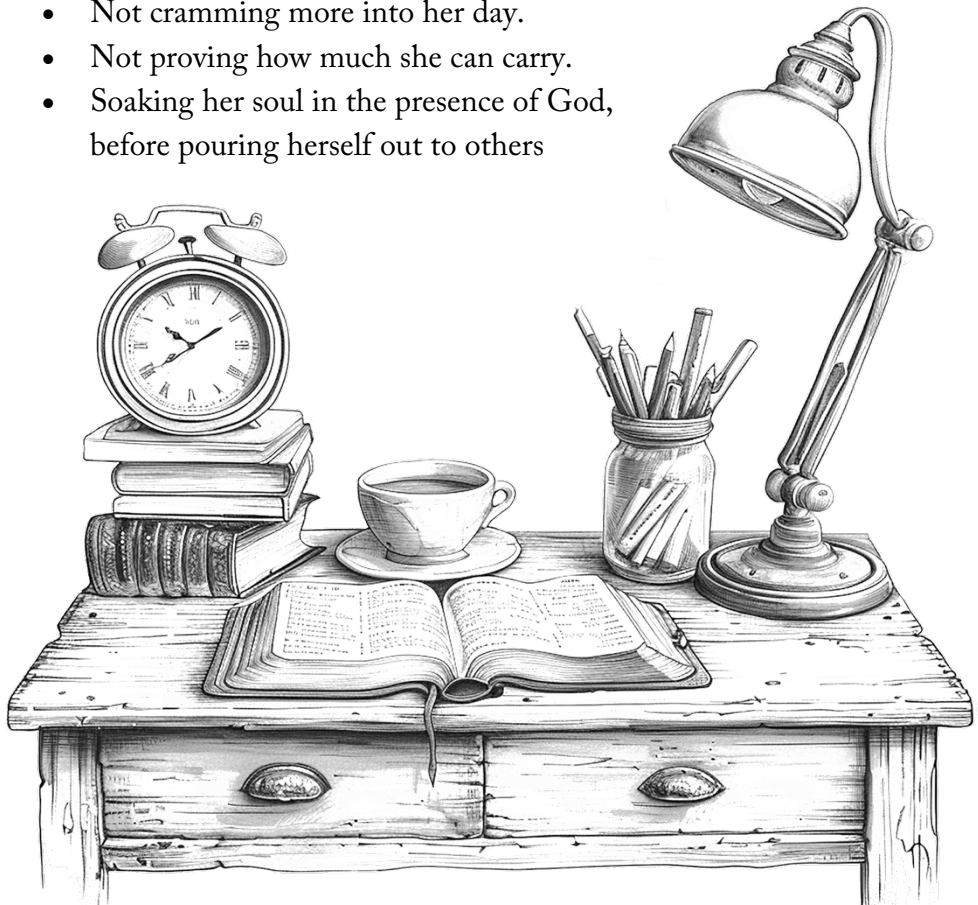
From one angle, Mary looks less disciplined. At first glance, she reminds me of my younger self. Any time there were dishes to be done, I'd be sitting in my bedroom hoping nobody would notice, but my sister always did.

Let's be clear, that's not what's going on here. What we're seeing here is discipline in action.

Jesus said, she “has chosen what is better” (v. 42). She pointed her flashlight at one thing—Jesus—and left it there before moving on.

That’s the heart of a P31 Woman:

- Not cramming more into her day.
- Not proving how much she can carry.
- Soaking her soul in the presence of God, before pouring herself out to others



SHE CHOOSES WHAT'S BETTER

We all love that feeling of an organized home, don't we? There's a sense of joy and relief when everything is in its place. Organizing expert Marie Kondo knows exactly how to get there. "Keep only those things that speak to your heart," she says. "Then take the plunge and discard all the rest."

Once you've named what stays and what goes, don't stop there. Bring that list to Jesus. Ask Him to help you put first things first.

Dear Heavenly Father,

Teach me to choose what matters most and let go of what doesn't.

Help me see my life the way You see it, and give me the courage to release what You haven't asked me to carry.

Set my heart on You first, and then show me how to order the rest of my day around Your will.

In Jesus' name, amen.

For most of us, this will mean starting where Mary did—at His feet.

And in your life, it might look like this:

- You open your Bible before you open your inbox.
- You kneel in prayer before you head out the door to work.
- You turn off your phone so you can be fully present with your husband, your family, or friends.
- You look your children in the eyes and listen before you tackle the next task.
- You sit with Jesus before you step into serving at church.

This is self-discipline for the P31 Woman: not just pushing yourself harder, but letting the Lord set your pace, your priorities, and your focus—one handful, with Him, in peace.

The P31 Challenge

After reading this chapter, where do you sense God challenging you to “live today with tomorrow in mind”?



Choose one small area to practice discipline on purpose.

Set a five-minute timer each day and use it for something you’ve been putting off—whether it’s prayer, Scripture, tidying one space, or giving your full attention to someone you love. Let that small act become a quiet offering to the Lord, trusting Him to shape your habits one faithful step at a time.