

*“Who can find a virtuous woman?
for her price is far above rubies.”
Proverbs 31:10*

Childhood holds untold potential, but while Childhood holds its promises, womanhood holds its fulfillments. Youth, those golden days of girlhood, is the transition between the two. This change is almost too great for us to comprehend. We look on in amazement when we see the tiny, green bud develop into a mature rose of brilliant hue; how much more wonderful is the change from the immaturities of childhood to the beauty and grace of young womanhood! We see this miracle performed before us continually, and yet we never cease to wonder at the sweetness, charm, and beauty of every newly budded woman.

Wonderful changes take place in the body of a girl in this transition. She takes on a new form and new symmetry. Organs that have been dormant during childhood suddenly wake into life and activity. She becomes, not merely a person, but a woman. And with this change in her physical body also comes wonderful changes in her nature. She has new emotions, new thoughts, and new dreams. She has a new view of life and takes a new course of action. She changes so completely that it is as if she has entered into an entirely new world.

The awakening comes quickly. While she will know the day or the week when the change comes, or be conscious of the miracle in her nature, the things of childhood will fast slip away. The little girl loses interest in her play world. The same little girl who no so long ago played with her dolls all day long now leaves them in their little beds for weeks at a time until she appeals to her mother, “These dolls are taking up too much space in my room. Can we get rid of them?” Mother and Father look on with dismay as they see these changes, knowing that their little girl is growing up and realizing that they must make room in their heart and life for the young woman developing before their eyes. They would put it

off a little longer if they could, because they will miss their little daughter, their baby girl; but even the love of the parent cannot stop the hands of time.

Youth cannot stand still. The changes in those early years happen so fast. Their hearts are so filled with a desire for change and variety that even a few days without change grow boring to her. The more excitement and change in life, the happier she is. Life to her is a succession of pleasant surprises.

Finally, the child becomes a woman. She slipped into girlhood naturally, and just as naturally will she lay off girlish ways and settle into womanhood. Life will take on a more sober look and she will see things more distinctly. Many of the warnings and much of the advice that she received in her girlhood, which seemed hard and unnecessary at the time, now appears in their true light, and now she is able to look back and thank her parents and teachers who gave these words of advice. She may even blush with embarrassment thinking of some of her girlish escapades, and become more embarrassed when she thinks of some of the things she wanted to do but Mother would not allow. She begins to talk quieter and laugh less impulsively. New feelings of responsibility press upon her. Life begins to look more serious than it used to do and she wonders how she ever could have been so careless of consequences. Our child is now a woman, and her nature craves something more real and satisfying than the fleeting pleasures of youth.

You are now in these busy, changing years. I have no better wish and prayer for you than that you may arrive in due time into the glorious state of womanhood with hearts pure and hands clean. Good women are needed everywhere, and the call for them will never grow faint. There will always be responsible places in life to be filled by women who are honest, true, and noble. The price of such a woman is beyond that of rubies. Their worth is more than all the riches of this world.

*“Remember now thy Creator in the
days of thy youth.” Ecclesiastes 12:1*

As the child enters her teen years there comes a deeper awakening which sometimes seems to bring the girl into the very presence of God. Somewhere along in these years the child who felt responsible only to her parents for her actions now begins to realize that she must answer to God Himself. Before, this child thought of wrong only as something forbidden by her parents, but now she begins to answer to a higher power. When the girl reaches the age where she feels accountable to God for her own actions, she starts to feel the need of higher help in order to do right. She looks with a new curiosity at the conduct of others, even of her parents, and sees in their lives a lack of true conduct or motive. She finds herself unable to do what she knows she should do, and realizes that her help must come from above.

This change of attitude toward God does not come instantly, but as the trees bud and leaf in the spring, every day bringing a gradual change until they stand in full leaf, so the girl week by week develops and gains knowledge and experience until she stands a woman grown before her God. At first there were only glimpses of what her character should be like and what her purpose in life is, but now she fully understands her duty to God. And as she saw her duty clearer and clearer before God she realized more and more her shortcomings. Then comes the natural cry of her heart for God, the longing of her soul for help from above.

This is how the young heart first awakes to its needs and in her need, finds the simple story of the cross. The power of Christ to save is now easily understood and embraced. The mind of the Christian girl has not been filled with the doubts and questions that often hinder those who disbelieve, and the truths of religion are quickly grasped. This is when the young Christian begins to feel the first touch of divine forgiveness and

begins to see their life as a life of service to their God.

This awakening of the conscience toward God is an amazing thing. It brings a slight uneasiness that causes the young heart to stop, ponder, consider, and turn the thoughts to holy things. If a girl will open her heart at this time and begin to ask honest questions about God and religion, seeking to know the truth, she will find the answers in the preaching of God's Word and will feel a strong impulse to give her life to Him. Looking at her own selfish motives, passions, and inclinations, she will begin to feel a shame and remorse for the wrongs that she has done, and will feel sorry that she has not been a better girl. Compared with this new life in Christ, she sees herself a sinner, lost, and without the hope of Heaven. And when opportunity is given, she will come to God with her dear young life.

This awakening of the heart to its sins and the need of the forgiveness of God is called conviction. It is the Spirit of God that causes this conviction which whispers to the soul, pointing out its needs. When a girl yields to conviction it brings her to repentance. And repentance will make her willing to forgive others just as she wants to be forgiven. When she has done all that she can to turn from her sins, calling earnestly on God, she will be forgiven, because God has promised to do so in His word. As she accepts God's forgiveness by faith, the burden of sin and guilt will go away, replaced with a feeling of peace and quietness.

This experience we have just been describing is called "conversion," or being "born again" (Acts 15:3; John 3:3). Conversion means change. From this time on it will be the young woman's desire to try and do things that are pleasing to God. She will find it easier to do right, and will find a joy in the service of God she never knew before. There is beauty untold in the Christian life and in service to God.

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