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VIRTUOUS

DISCUSSION GUIDE

**"VIRTUOUS IS
A GREAT FILM
ABOUT DEALING
WITH ADVERSITY AND
OVERCOMING IT."**
— GOVERNOR MIKE HUCKABEE



VIRTUOUS

INTRODUCTION



BY MELISSA RINGSTAFF

**See what great love the Father has lavished on us,
that we should be called children of God!**

1 John 3:1

You are a daughter of the King. *You are loved.*

Virtuous is a movie about hope, grace, and redemption. Featuring ten different women from all walks of life, we see how Proverbs 31 is exemplified in these women's lives. Proverbs 31 is not a passage of Scripture given to discourage women, rather the verses show us how, as women of the Word, we can live out our lives with purpose each day.

Today's generation of women are experiencing a tremendous increase in violent crimes including rape, a divorce rate indistinguishable from secular society, and a single-mom epidemic. The culture of family and community is changing, but that doesn't mean it must deteriorate! Empowering women to challenge adversity, while following the teachings of Christ is the mission of *Virtuous*.



DISCUSSION GUIDE

VIRTUOUS

DAY 1

VIRTUE: HOPE | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:31

SCENE: **0:32:30** Simone returns to the Potter's house where she is greeted by her house mother, Ms. Charlotte, who, despite Simone's fears, welcomes her back with joy, acceptance and forgiveness.

READ: **Luke 15:11-32**

In the story of the Prodigal Son, we see how a loving father welcomes his child home with arms open wide. It's a joyful reunion! Simone returns home to the Potter's House and she finds shelter from the storm raging in her life. Our Father in heaven celebrates each time one of his children returns home!

So often in this life we allow our failures to define our lives, but you are more than the sum of your failures! You are a precious child of the King who wants you to come home and accept His love and care.

APPLY: Have you ever felt like all hope was lost? Write about a time when God provided for a need.

VIRTUE: RESILIENCE | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:25, 26

SCENE: **0:40:30** SPC Summer Gabriel, played by American hero POW Jessica Lynch, learns that 23 year old PFC Tara Carter is being held prisoner by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

READ: **John 8:31-36**

Jesus tell us that everyone who sins is a slave to sin, but that those who follow Him will know the truth and that the truth will set them free. Sin causes pain and sorrow in our lives and keeps from truly living a life of freedom in Christ.

APPLY: Most of us will never be held in a prison cell, but everyone has experienced the bondage of sin. What is keeping you from being truly set free?

VIRTUOUS

DAY 2

VIRTUE: COMPASSION | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:20-23

SCENE: **1:10:30** Kayleigh has opened her home and her heart to Simone. She shows her hospitality and grace by offering her a place to stay, food to eat and most of all, friendship. Simone's life is touched by the love of Christ through the kind actions of Kayleigh.

READ: **Proverbs 31:8 & Matthew 14:13-21**

There are those in our communities or perhaps in our own families who are hurting and need help; who cannot speak up for themselves. Jesus set the example for us by showing compassion on the poor, sick, broken and hungry. We are to follow in His footsteps and live out a tangible form of compassion to those around us. It's with God's Spirit residing within us that we can look at the people around us, not with disdain or judgment, but with compassion!

APPLY: Is there someone in your life who cannot speak up for them? How can you show compassion to your family, friends, or people in your community?

VIRTUE: LOYALTY | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:11, 12

SCENE: **1:55:22** Detective Anita is loyal to her job and to her daughter, but bitterness and hurt has caused her to believe that her unfaithful husband won't change. In this scene we see that she is ready to forgive him as she tears up the divorce papers. With God's help, Anita is able to forgive him and restore their marriage.

READ: **Ruth 1:16-22 & 1 John 1:9**

We see in Ruth chapter 1 that Naomi is very bitter. She tells Ruth to call her Mara, which means "bitterness." Naomi was bitter because her husband and sons had died. Grief is certainly understandable under those circumstances! Grief or sorrow is an appropriate reaction to a sad event in our lives. Bitterness, however, is a response to the situation that leaves us feeling resentful and even angry.

Despite Naomi's bitterness, Ruth is determined to stay with her, showing us what it means to be loyal to those we love. Likewise, Christ is loyal to His people - being faithful and just to forgive when we confess our sins.

APPLY: Do you struggle to forgive those who have hurt you? How can we learn to forgive just as Christ has forgiven us?

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DAY 3

VIRTUE: HUMILITY | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:30

SCENE: **1:13:43** Nurse Kathy is a faithful and kind woman and serves others with a humble spirit. Mr. Weldon was a difficult, rather ungrateful patient and yet, Nurse Kathy offers him grace and empathy.

READ: **1 Peter 3:1-6 & Ephesians 4:1-7**

In 1 Peter 3: 1-6, we see that a gentle and quiet spirit is very precious in God's sight. In Ephesians 4:1-7, we learn that Jesus desires His people to be gentle, humble, and patient! Sometimes when dealing with people who are ungrateful, mean, rude or thoughtless our first reaction is to become defensive and protect our own rights. However, Jesus shows how turning the other cheek is the better way.

APPLY: Lots of people in our lives can test our patience, whether it is our husbands, children, co-workers or even church members! Do you let other people's actions dictate how you treat them? Or, do you extend grace to those who may not deserve it? Pray and ask God to give you a gentle and quiet spirit.

VIRTUE: INTENTION | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:26

SCENE: **1:30:52** Diane Landers, a Potter's House Graduate, has found victory over her past through Jesus Christ. She refuses to let her prior circumstances keep her from reaching her goal for a better future.

READ: **Micah 7:18, 19**

Past mistakes can leave us feeling shame, which can make us feel unworthy of love. But Jesus does not hold our former mistakes over our heads, reminding us over and over again how bad we are. Instead, He casts our sins into the sea – never to find them again.

When we give our hearts to Jesus and ask for forgiveness we can be sure that He has done just that!

APPLY: Guilt and shame are bondages that Satan uses to discourage our walk in Christ. It's Satan that reminds us of our failures. Are you holding onto guilt or shame? Ask God to forgive you and believe in His promise.

VIRTUOUS

DAY 4

VIRTUE: DETERMINATION | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:16-19

SCENE: **1:49:12** Reporter Campbell is on a mission to be the station's news anchor. She's willing to do whatever it takes to get the story - until she feels God's grace and forgiveness at the Potter's House. Because of this change, Reporter Campbell is willing to lose her job in order to do what is right.

READ: **Esther 4**

Esther was willing to do whatever it took to save her people and follow God's will for her life – even if it meant death. Few of us will ever be faced with that kind of “life or death” situation, but all of us face choices each day to either do what is right or do what is wrong. Reporter Campbell made the right choice. Will you?

APPLY: God has put you in this place “for such a time as this.” How is He using your current circumstances for His glory? How can you glorify God this week?

VIRTUE: WISDOM | VERSE: PROVERBS 31: 27, 28

SCENE: **0:43:40** Trish is a single mom and is dedicated to taking care of her son and their home. We learn that she works nights and sleeps during the day while her son is at school so that he doesn't have to be alone.

She is wise in the use of her time, seeing that her home is a place that is full of joy and love. Being a single mom can be challenging but, Trish doesn't let that discourage her. Instead, she finds ways to manage her resources and encourage and watch after her son.

READ: **James 3:13-18**

Wisdom that comes from heaven makes us into better women. It shapes our characters so that we are peaceful, loving, considerate, full of mercy, and sincere. However, wisdom that comes from this world encourages selfishness.

APPLY: How do you improve your household? Write about something at home that discourages you. Then, write ' down a goal to help you change for the better.



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DAY 5

VIRTUE: SELFLESSNESS | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:13-16

SCENE: **1:21:40** Judge Ferguson is a respected woman in the community and yet in her own home, her husband disrespects her and treats her with disdain. She serves her husband with patience regardless of his cruel words, but her heart is broken. In marriage, we should offer this kind of love and patience every day! However, she allows her husband to continually verbally and emotionally abuse her.

READ: **Ephesians 5:21-33 & John 15:13**

This passage tells us that we are to serve one another in love. Wives are called to respect their husbands and serve them as they would serve the Lord. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church.

Ideally, marriage is between two people who love and respect each other; who put the other's interests and happiness first. When one spouse does not treat the other with respect, there is a breakdown in God's plan for marriage. Abuse is not okay and God does not expect His children to suffer abuse in any form.

APPLY: Do you treat others with a pure, selfless love? How do you lay down your life each day for those you love?

If you are in a situation where you are being abused or you know someone who is being abused – whether it is physical, verbal, mental, emotional, or sexual – please get help. You can talk to your pastor or call the National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233 or 1-800-787-3224.

VIRTUE: CHERISHED | VERSE: PROVERBS 31:10

SCENE: **1:27:50** When Pastor Carter learns that PFC Tara Carter has been injured in Afghanistan, he realizes how close he came to losing his daughter. He is grateful to God that she is going to be okay and when Tara is welcomed home by her family we see how much they cherish her.

READ: **Romans 8:31-39**

Our Heavenly Father cherishes us. He loves us with a love that has no bounds! It's an everlasting love that cannot be broken. Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Sometimes it's hard to fully trust God to love us unconditionally because we have been disappointed so many times by people we love. The Good News is that Jesus' love is a perfect love that casts out all fear. He will never disappoint you.

APPLY: Have you ever doubted God's love for you? It's time to bask in the sweet warmth of His love and hold nothing back. Give your heart completely to Jesus and let Him show you what it really means to be cherished.

CONCLUSION

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VIRTUOUS

Being A Virtuous Woman
isn't about being
"perfect."

*It's about living
life with purpose.*

- Melissa Ringstaff, A Virtuous Woman

Often women believe that Proverbs 31 doesn't really apply to our modern lives.
At A Virtuous Woman, we believe that God's Word stands the test of time.

Find thousands of inspiring articles, ideas, free printables, and
resources for women at www.AVirtuousWoman.org.

I tell you, her sins, which are many, are
forgiven—for she loved much. Luke 7:47

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