

SHE SMILES AT THE FUTURE

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“... And she smiles at the future.” Proverbs 31:25

I like to refer to the lady in Proverbs 31 as the Bible's Wonder Woman. This woman is amazing. She embodies all the qualities that we, as women, can admire and aspire to emulate. My personal favorite verse in that chapter is verse 25. I memorized it many years ago in the New American Standard version and it says “Strength and dignity are her clothing, and she smiles at the future.” The phrase that always gets my attention is **“she smiles at the future.”**

Let me provide some context. . . I come from a long line of worriers. In fact, I grew up with the impression that worry was an admirable quality—an indicator that I was a responsible person. After all, **if I took my responsibilities seriously, didn't that mean that it was my duty to worry?** Imagine my shock when, as a young Christian, I found out that worry was a sin. Wait—what?!?!

My natural view of the future was (and often still is) filled with worry about what-ifs. Many years ago there was a book and a TV show called “Worst Case Scenario.” I never read the book or watched the show. I didn't need to—I could have provided

them with endless scripts based on my upbringing. Why, I was a natural when it came to visualizing worst case scenarios, and I can assure you no one thought I was smiling at the future. But when I became a Christian I made a choice to set aside what I thought was a good idea, and, instead, find out what God had to say. Philippians 4:6, 7 leaves no room for doubt:

⁶Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Don't get me wrong and think that this way of thinking now comes naturally to me. It does not. But in my head I can choose to **direct my thinking elsewhere** when it is headed down the wrong path.

Your future may look very different from mine, depending on your life stage. But whatever it entails, decide to transition into it with a hopeful attitude. Of course, each stage has challenges (that's called real life!). **But good things—very good things—are found in EVERY stage.** (I am 68 years old so trust me on this.) Write these good things down if your mind needs a shove in the right direction. I believe that Jesus wants us to be hopeful people. Proverbs 23:18 says "Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off." Let's smile at the future together.