



31 Proverbs
TO LIGHT YOUR
Path

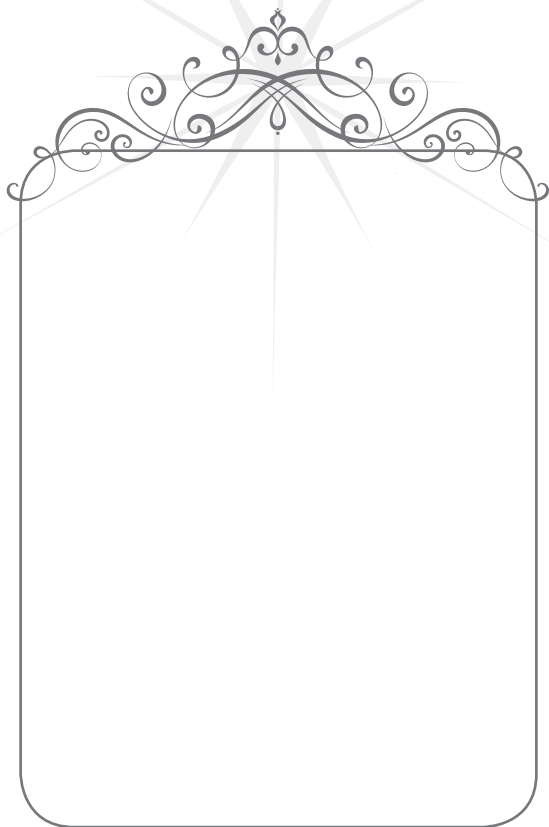
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LIZ CURTIS HIGGS

Best-selling author of *31 Verses to Write on Your Heart*



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Praise for
31 Proverbs to Light Your Path

“Liz Curtis Higgs has a contagious passion for the Word of God, something you see so beautifully in play in *31 Proverbs to Light Your Path*. Practical, well-researched, and full of poignant stories, this book will empower you to live in light of God’s wisdom.”

—MARY DEMUTH, author of *Jesus Every Day*

“Truly a devotional treasure. In *31 Proverbs to Light Your Path*, Liz gently leads us through a series of proverbs, unpacking them with depth and insight as she shares discoveries from her own journey and offers ideas for personal application. This book reminds us that Proverbs is much more than a collection of pithy insights; it is a rich well of wisdom and revelation for everyday life. Keep it on your bedside table.”

—JO SAXTON, author of *The Dream of You* and board chair of 3Dmovements

“With a delightfully fresh approach, *31 Proverbs to Light Your Path* illuminates familiar passages, and Liz makes the journey through these words of wisdom both personal and practical. Many books focus on general truths in Proverbs, but Liz goes word by word, and this digging turns up plenty of new treasures along the way. This is a book I’ll gladly return to again and again.”

—HOLLEY GERTH, author of *What Your Heart Needs for the Hard Days*

“For most of my life, I’ve prayed one single prayer over and over: ‘God, grant me wisdom!’ Even as a child, I knew wisdom to be

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my lamp in the dark, a needed comfort while trying to find my way through a complicated life. In *31 Proverbs to Light Your Path*, Liz Curtis Higgs mines rich biblical text to reveal the brightest of lights, thirty-one truths with enough wattage to help you and me walk through the most difficult of nights. Even better, she comes alongside and takes the journey with us.”

—MICHELE CUSHATT, author of *Undone* and *I Am*

“I absolutely love how Liz Curtis Higgs writes with clarity, tenderness, truth, humor, and depth. As in her other books, Liz uses careful study of God’s Word to reveal the nuances of the original Hebrew in the selected scriptures. Formatted for both personal and group Bible study, this is not a read-only-once book. Each writing is full of richness that will have the reader discovering new insights with each reading. The “One Minute, One Step” challenges are practical, eye-opening, and sometimes convicting. You will come away from this book with a greater understanding of the character and goodness of God and how our lives can reflect His truth.”

—VIVIAN MABUNI, author of *Warrior in Pink*

Praise for
31 Verses to Write on Your Heart

“Liz Curtis Higgs has given us a versatile resource. Part story-rich devotional and part study-driven commentary, *31 Verses to Write on Your Heart* is as smart as it is approachable, as profound as it is practical.”

—AMANDA BIBLE WILLIAMS, Chief Content Officer of
She Reads Truth and coauthor of *Open Your Bible:
God’s Word Is for You and for Now*

“Liz writes just as she speaks: eloquently, accurately, and with power. With her signature style, she weaves biblical context, fresh insight, and practical application in a way that empowers, educates, and equips. And if we ever needed a deeper understanding of God’s Word, ever needed His precious truths written on our hearts, it’s now. It’s today.”

—SUSIE LARSON, radio host of *Live the Promise*
and author of *Your Powerful Prayers*

“Consider *31 Verses to Write on Your Heart* your new spiritual strategy for deepening your daily walk with God. Full of relatable stories, this Scripture-saturated guide enables you to see familiar verses in a fresh, relevant way. Whether you’ve walked with Jesus for decades—or just since last Tuesday—this encouraging and practical book will fertilize your soul.”

—KAREN EHMAN, Proverbs 31 Ministries national
speaker and *New York Times* best-selling author
of *Keep It Shut*

“Writing God’s Word on our hearts is insurance. It’s truth we can call on 24/7 in times of fear, insecurity, or intimidation. Liz, a faithful friend to all of us, has searched out truth and shared it by way of her brilliant mind and darling heart. Don’t miss this chance for thirty-one days of life enrichment.”

—PATSY CLAIRMONT, Women of Faith speaker, artist,
and author of *You Are More Than You Know*

“Liz Curtis Higgs has a gift for taking important truths in Scripture and making them accessible, understandable, and easily digestible. You will be inspired and encouraged to cherish God’s Word through practical and personal tips for hiding His letter of love in your heart.”

—CHRystal EVANS HURST, author of *She’s Still There:
Rescuing the Girl in You*

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31 PROVERBS TO LIGHT YOUR PATH

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*To my son, Matt,
my daughter, Lilly,
and my daughter-in-love, Beth:
The clear light you each shine on my path
brightens and widens my understanding of our world
and strengthens my grip on God's mercy.
For this and so much more,
I love you!
xox Mom*

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Walk with Me

*W*hen my physical therapist began our first session with “Quad sets are a neuromuscular isometric,” I knew I was in trouble. He’d already lost me at “quad sets,” which sounded like four games of tennis. But “neuromuscular isometric”?

“Seriously?” I blurted out, trying not to laugh.

His gaze narrowed. “Mrs. Higgs, do you plan on walking again?”

I sat up straighter in bed, wincing as pain ricocheted through my newly installed bionic knee. “Use all the big words you like. Just tell me what to do.”

Following his instructions, I stretched out my leg, pointed my toes toward the ceiling, and slowly pressed the back of my knee into the bed. He counted while I held my muscles in place for ten seconds. After several repetitions I shrugged. “That’s it? I barely moved.”

“Good. Now ten more.”

Once he assured me each rep would strengthen my knee and improve my range of motion, I stopped asking questions and started doing quad sets, ankle pumps, seated knee extensions, and all the other exercises on his clipboard. In due time I was mobile again, amazed at how a series of seemingly minor steps had carried me along the path to wellness.

Which brings me to you, to this book, to right now.

You and I will be walking step-by-step through thirty-one verses from the book of Proverbs. Left to my own devices, I might have picked only the upbeat verses, the cheerful ones. But when I asked hundreds of women to choose their favorites, they were wise enough to know that we learn more—and grow faster—when our thinking is challenged and our motives and actions are considered.

So as we look at the verses together, you'll likely find many are comforting, some are a bit unsettling, and a few may squash your toes, as they did mine. Yet you can be sure God crafted each word in Proverbs for your benefit, since He promises to “instruct you in the way of wisdom and lead you along straight paths.”¹

Clearly, God will do the leading. I'm here to keep you company.

We'll be taking a word-by-word-*by-word* approach to Bible study. My theory? Better to chew slowly and savor each phrase than to swallow a passage whole and not remember what we ate.

I've used more than thirty different English translations to capture the subtle nuances of the original Hebrew and enrich our understanding of His Word. If you're curious about notations such as ASV, which denotes the American Standard Version, you'll find a complete list of translations and their abbreviations on page

201. I've also included a Study Guide that further explores each chapter. You might answer the questions as you go, or you may decide to gather with a group of friends and use *31 Proverbs to Light Your Path* as a six-week Bible study.

At first glance the book of Proverbs appears to be a long list of rules about right living. More than one mom has thought about marching up to her teenager's bedroom door and demanding, "How long will you lie there, you sluggard?"² And more than one employee has been tempted to tell a coworker who peppers his speech with four-letter words, "Keep corrupt talk far from your lips."³

If you're looking for dos and don'ts, Proverbs has plenty to offer.

But the deeper truth it contains is *wisdom*. We'll discover why God calls us to righteousness and how He makes being good possible. We'll learn about our human nature and His divine nature, about the dark alleys to avoid and the well-lit paths to follow. God says of His Word, "This command is a lamp, this teaching is a light, and correction and instruction are the way to life."⁴

My goal is not to show you how to be good. My goal is to show you how good God is.

At the end of each chapter, I've added a simple challenge—"One Minute, One Step"—a do-it-now task that requires *sixty seconds or less*. If you have a notepad, a pen, a Bible, your purse, some stationery, and your phone, that's all you'll need. By moving straight from words to actions, we can immediately apply what we've learned and discover how God uses even the smallest steps to lead us in the right direction.

When you reach the "One Minute, One Step" prompt, I hope

you'll resist the urge to close the book, thinking, *Great idea! I'll try that later*, and instead just *do it*. Sixty seconds max, I promise. Think of it as a spiritual quad set—a tiny but powerful exercise to get you on your feet and on the move for God.

His light is shining, and the path ahead is clear. Ready when you are, beloved.



I

Morning by Morning

*The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.*

PROVERBS 4:18

I rose earlier than usual one morning, nudged awake by two cats impatient for breakfast. The sky outside our kitchen window was a deep navy blue, the birdsong was lively, and the windowpanes were cold to the touch. As I gazed at the eastern horizon, the sky slowly grew lighter. If I watched without turning away, the change was too gradual to measure, but if I glanced down for a moment and then looked up, the difference was remarkable.

Our spiritual growth is much the same. Morning by morning we may not see any noticeable improvement in our thought patterns or behavior. But as we read God's Word, as we worship, as we pray, as we fellowship with other believers, as we serve Him

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with gladness, as we give away our resources to help others, the light of His love continues to rise in our hearts until it shows in our words and shines on our faces.

Now let's see what this verse from Proverbs has for us.

The path of the righteous . . . *Proverbs 4:18*

Very promising, the word *path*. God doesn't expect us to get where we're going all at once. This "road the righteous travel" (GNT), this "way of those who do right" (VOICE) is a pathway, not an expressway.

As to our being righteous, that is entirely the Lord's work. Righteousness isn't about our goodness; it's about God's goodness. We can't become "right-living people" (MSG) on our own. Our walk with Him is upright only because He bent down to carry a cross.

It's His Spirit in us that prompts us to say and do the right things—to be loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and disciplined.¹ All that delicious fruit of the Spirit is produced when we depend on God, not when we depend on our own strength. What a relief!

This is how our daily journey is meant to look and feel:

. . . is like the morning sun, . . . *Proverbs 4:18*

That "first gleam of dawn" (NLT), that "early morning light" (NLV) is not only pure; it's also sure. The sun never changes its mind, never chooses not to rise, never goes back to bed. It keeps moving, tracing a steady path across the sky. Even when threatening clouds hover over us, even when wild storms rage inside us, far above those thunderheads, the sun still shines.

Because of His power, we, too, can keep shining. Because of His Son, the light of the world, we can “glow” (MSG) despite our circumstances. We are still His people. He is still our God. Nothing will ever change that. Nothing.

You and I are counted among those who walk the path of the righteous, based not on how we act but on whom we follow. “The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.”² What He does is shine in us.

... shining ever brighter . . . *Proverbs 4:18*

He who created light and called it good also created you and called you righteous. You may be thinking, *That’s fine, Liz, but life isn’t “growing brighter and brighter” (EXB) at my house, and I’m definitely not feeling that my path is “clearer” (AMPC) with each passing day.*

I hear you. I’m with you. That’s why God calls us to focus on truth. Rather than trust our ever-changing emotions, He wants us to trust what His Word tells us: “This righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe.”³

Do you believe, dear friend? Then count on God for the “brightening” (VLT) that is certain to appear. Don’t look in the mirror. Look in His Word. See? It’s coming.

... till the full light of day. *Proverbs 4:18*

Jesus promised, “Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”⁴ *His* light. *His* life. When do we reach “full light”? When we stand before His throne on that “perfect day” (ASV). Until then we live “in the ever-brightening

light of God’s favor” (TLB), with our faith expanding and our confidence strengthening.

By the very nature of the maturing process, we begin each day with more knowledge, more wisdom, and more experience than we had the day before. For those who love God, “the longer they live, the brighter they shine” (MSG). Why dread your next birthday when each year brings you closer to the One who loves you more than anyone on earth ever could?

A glorious day will come—just imagine it!—when we say with our faces lifted in awe, “Good morning, Lord.” May the anticipation of that joyous moment propel us forward on our path, knowing we are moving in the right direction: toward Him.



*Lord Jesus,
 help me turn away from darkness,
 disappointment, and discouragement
 to gaze steadily at You,
 my Source of light and life,
 my sun and my shield.
 Strengthen my trust in You
 for the big things, for the small things,
 for all things.
 Remind me that, as sure as the sun
 rises every morning,
 Your goodness and righteousness
 will shine on me and in me,
 morning by morning,
 brighter and brighter.*

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One Minute, One Step



Invite more light into your life.

Look around for an easy way to brighten your immediate surroundings. Open a curtain, pull up a window blind, or maybe turn on more lights. You might try dusting a light bulb you can easily reach. The lamp should be turned off and the bulb cool. Carefully wipe it clean with a soft cloth or dryer sheet, and then turn on the lamp. Surprise! A significant difference, yes?

Now that you've added more light, what do you see that you didn't notice before?

*The path of the righteous is like the morning sun,
shining ever brighter till the full light of day.*

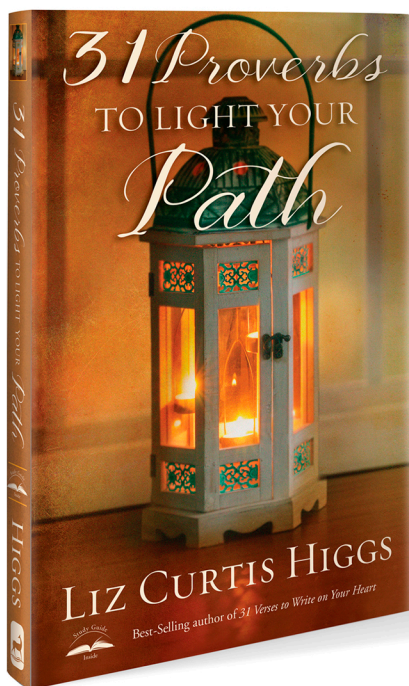
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