

TWENTY FIRST ANNUAL
"LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD"
LECTURESHIP, 2013

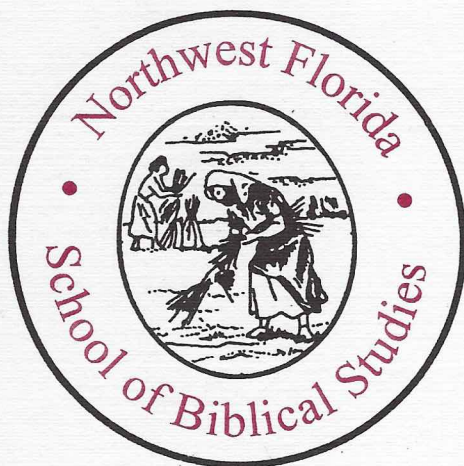
Preaching Through The PROVERBS

NORTHWEST FLORIDA SCHOOL OF BIBLICAL STUDIES
Training Laborers for ...

THE HARVEST

"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest."

(Luke 10:2)



Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies offers a great opportunity for those who desire to be better trained laborers in God's field of harvest. Tuition Free!

**TWENTY FIRST ANNUAL
“LABOURERS TOGETHER WITH GOD”
LECTURESHIP**

February 17-21, 2013

THEME:

**PREACHING THROUGH THE
PROVERBS**

Editor:
Sidney White

This book is **FREE**
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FORWARD

This book contains 28 lessons from the book of Proverbs which were prepared to be delivered at the 2013 *Northwest Florida School of Biblical Studies* lectureship. The study of the Proverbs is an exciting study because of the practical nature of its contents. We often emphasize that in teaching the word of God, we must be sure that those in our audience can apply the lessons we teach in their everyday lives. Proverbs shows that so clearly. The Proverbs repeatedly emphasize the importance of wisdom, knowledge and understanding. Without these, we will never be pleasing to God. The Proverbs are given “to promote wisdom, instruction, understanding, righteousness, justice, equity, knowledge, discretion, learning and sound counsels” (DeHoff Comm., vol. 3, p.250).

The Proverbs are short sayings in which the truth of the saying is clearly evident, and deals with the practical matters of life. This lectureship book contains 28 lessons on 28 different subjects found within the book of Proverbs — just touching the hem of the garment of the different subjects and valuable lessons contained in the book. While men have lived in different dispensations of time, the lessons within the Proverbs are ageless truths that are very usable and practical in any and every dispensation. Thus, the Proverbs serve as very practical and usable teaching for the Christian dispensation — for those of us in the 21st century.

The first six verses of the book seem to give the real design of the rest of the book. Again, these verses appeal to the reader to “know wisdom and instruction, to perceive the words of understanding; to receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity; to give subtlety to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.” The book of Proverbs “has a “down-to-earth” quality that is so rich and vibrant (Johnny Ramsey, *Practical Bible Studies*, vol. 2, p.19).

Therefore, we believe this lectureship book will serve as a great tool for learning for those who are interested in pleasing God, living life as He would instruct, and ultimately being with Him eternally.

Sidney White
Lectureship Director
February 2013

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OVERVIEW OF PROVERBS

Patrick Gray

1. It has been said by many that we live in the "information age." There is no doubt that the distribution of knowledge, via modern technology, is unequalled in human history. One prime example would be the I-Phone which allows us (among other things) to download videos with step by step instructions on how to fix a car, fly an airplane, or create your own "green technology" so as to become energy independent. But what has all this knowledge produced?
 - a. A generation which can split the atom and then deny the One who created these tiny building blocks.
 - b. A generation which prints more books, conducts more seminars, hosts more talk show hosts on the subject of marriage only to find that the institution of marriage itself is failing.
 - c. A generation which promotes "tolerance" and then excoriates anyone not carrying the "party line" and speaking in a "politically correct" manner.
 - d. A generation which fines tens of thousands of dollars and promises jail time to one harming an eagle's nest and its offspring, and then defends the "right" of a woman to murder her own child in the name of choice.
 - e. Clearly, we are a generation with knowledge, but little, if any, wisdom!
2. In the book, "How to read the Bible for all its worth," Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stewart define wisdom as "...the discipline of applying truth to one's life in the light of experience."
3. The truth is, we have been blessed (more than we know) to have available the wisdom which is "from above" in written form. To know that God would set aside whole books in the sacred text to compile the wisdom of the ages is a blessing indeed!
4. The books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Job are gems of wisdom that should be read and digested on a daily basis. How unfortunate that so many live their lives without ever taking time to consult these wonderful truths!
 - a. Far too often these books are consulted and applied in a way they were never intended. Their message is obscured with a clumsy approach and half-hearted effort to mine the jewels God provides us.
 - b. There are at least three ways in which wisdom literature is misused and therefore misses the point God intended.
 - 1) The books are often read in small parts, ignoring the overall meaning the writer was attempting to convey.

- a) One example would be taken from Ecclesiastes where Solomon said that there is a time and season for everything, including a “time to die.” This passage has been quoted many times to make the point that God has a specific time span for us and that when its our “time,” then its our time.
- b) The context shows the writer was simply looking at life from a cynical point of view and was saying that no matter how good or bad your life is, we all die.
- 2) Often terms and literary modes are overlooked in our study and we come away with a meaning foreign to the text.
 - a) One example would be Prov. 14:7 which states, “Go from the presence of a foolish man, when thou perceivest not in him the lips of knowledge.”
 - b) Does this mean that God’s children should stay away from the retarded, uneducated, or mentally ill? In Proverbs, “fool” means essentially “infidel” which refers to an individual who lives his life selfishly and acknowledges no higher power than himself.
 - c) “Going from the presence” is linked to the idea of seeking knowledge. In other words, if we are seeking knowledge we must not seek it from an infidel – “fool.”
- 3) Often the line of argument being made in wisdom literature is overlooked causing us to go away with a meaning opposite of that which was intended.
 - a) Consider the idea in Job where Eliphaz was attempting to make the case that Job’s suffering was the result of evil living. He said, “The wicked man travaileth with pain all his days, and the number of years is hidden to the oppressor.” Job 15:20
 - b) This text has been used to show that wicked people cannot be happy. This is definitely not what the text is teaching, seeing as how later, God condemns the words of Eliphaz and vindicates the words of Job.
- 5. Our study focuses on the book of Proverbs. This sacred collection of proverbial sayings is designed to help us live happy and productive lives.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE PROVERBS OF SOLOMON IS A TITLE — MUCH LIKE THE (PSALMS OF DAVID).

- A. 1 Kings 4:29-34, “And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.³⁰ And Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt....”

- B. Not all the Proverbs were written or recorded by Solomon.
 1. "These are also proverbs of Solomon which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied." Prov. 25:1
 2. "The words of Agur the son of Jakeh, his utterance. This man declared to Ithiel – to Ithiel and Ucal." Prov. 30:1
 3. "The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him." Prov. 31:1

II. "THE BOOK OF PROVERBS" CONTAINS WISDOM THAT COVERS EVERY RELATIONSHIP IN LIFE (FAMILY, FRIENDS, WORK, ETC.) Of all the relationships we have, the one which is most significant is our relationship with God! For example, in our relationship with God, we learn from Proverbs that...

- A. True wisdom fears the Lord. But why should we fear the Lord?
 1. It is the beginning of wisdom itself.
 2. Prov. 1:7; Unless we "fear of the Lord", we will not be open to the Word of God, Prov. 1:7 ("...fools despise wisdom and instruction")
- B. The "Fear of the Lord"...
 1. Prolongs life, Prov. 10:27
 2. Keeps us away from evil. Prov. 16:6
 3. Increases our quality of life. Prov. 22:4
 4. Provides refuge. Prov. 14:26b
 - * We have help in troublous times, unlike those who face them without God's help

III. WISDOM RECOGNIZES SOME THINGS ARE AN ABOMINATION TO GOD.

- A. "These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him..." Prov. 6:16-19
- B. False weights. Prov. 11:1
- C. A wicked king. Prov. 16:12
 1. God established governments so when it is perverted it is an abomination.
 2. The purpose of government is stated clearly in 1 Peter 2:13-15.
 3. When government promotes homosexuality.
 4. When they defend the "right" of women to murder their unborn babies.
 5. When they suppress the freedom of speech of those who preach righteousness then, they have lost sight of their God-given duty (it is an abomination).
- D. The sacrifice/worship of the wicked. Prov. 15:8
- E. The prayers of those who ignore the law of God. Prov. 28:9

IV. FROM PROVERBS, WE LEARN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS AFFECTED BY OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS.

- A. The poor and needy. How we treat them reflects how we treat God! Prov. 14:31
 1. Do not make fun of their plight! Prov. 17:5
 2. The Lord will bless those who are gracious to the poor. Prov. 19:17
 3. The Lord is angry with those who rob the poor. Prov. 22:22-23
 4. God is concerned for the widow. Prov. 15:25
- B. Wisdom is provided regarding the treatment of our enemies. Prov. 24:17-18
- C. Wisdom is provided for our domestic relationships.
 1. Prov. 31:30. In choosing a mate we should look deeper than the skin.
 2. Prov. 17:1 reminds us of the need to seek peace in our homes, etc.

CONCLUSION:

1. A knowledge of Proverbs helps us do those things which please God by avoiding the things He hates and learning to treat others with righteousness and justice.
 - a. The promise: "He who heeds the word wisely will find good, And whoever trusts in the Lord, happy is he." Prov. 16:20
 - b. The warning: "Every word of God is pure; He is a shield to those who put their trust in Him. Do not add to His words, Lest He reprove you, and you be found a liar." Prov. 30:5-6
 2. Have you placed your trust in the Lord by humbly submitting to His Words?
-

THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD

Proverbs 15:3
James Seagars

1. It is impossible for any mortal to explain the mind of God.
 - a. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counselor" (Rom. 11:33, 34)?
 - b. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher

than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9).

2. How shall the word "omniscience," which is not found in the Bible, be defined?
 - a. "Having infinite awareness, understanding, and insight." *Webster's*
 - b. "Divine perfection whereby He knows and comprehends all things in their inmost being, and that immediately." *Manual of Reformed Doctrine*
 - c. "God knows all things and is absolutely perfect in knowledge." *Great Doctrines of the Bible*
 - d. Past, present, and future are all the same to God. He has never learned anything nor discovered a new fact. He is never surprised.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE SCRIPTURES AFFIRM THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD.

- A. "Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite" (Psa. 147:5). Infinite means subject to no limitation or external determination.
- B. "...His understanding is unsearchable" (Isa. 40:5 NKJV).
- C. "...For the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (1 Sam. 2:3).

II. GOD IS OMNISCIENT IN NATURE.

- A. "Are not two sparrows sold for one cent? Yet not one of them falls on the ground without your Father's knowledge." (Matt.10:29, McCord).
- B. "Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?" (Job 38:4-7 NKJV)

III. GOD IS OMNISCIENT IN HUMAN AFFAIRS.

- A. "...For Jehovah seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but Jehovah looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7 ASV).
- B. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of Jehovah; and he maketh level all his paths" (Prov. 5:21 ASV).
- C. "O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Thou compasseth my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways" (Psa. 139:1-3).

- D. "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account" (Heb. 4:13 NKJV).

IV. PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE ARE ALL THE SAME TO GOD.

- A. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psa. 90:1, 2).
- B. "Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9, 10).
- C. "Known to God from eternity all His works" (Acts 15:18 NKJV).

V. THE OMNISCIENCE OF GOD MAKES POSSIBLE SOME GREAT THINGS.

- A. It assures that God can hear and answer the Christians' prayers (Phil. 4:6; 1 Peter 3:12; 1 John 3:22).
- B. It strengthens our faith in God's providence (Matt. 6:25-34; 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 13:5).
- C. It enables God to operate our universe (Psa. 8:3,4; 19:1,2; Heb. 1:1-4).
- D. It permits the resurrection of the dead (John 5:28,29; 1 Cor. 15:16-22).
- E. It guarantees a just distribution of rewards and punishments (Eccl. 12:14; Jer. 17:10; 2 Cor. 5:10).

CONCLUSION:

1. "...He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10).
 2. All scripture references are from the *King James Version* unless indicated otherwise.
-

DILIGENCE IN ALL THAT WE DO

John Cotham

DILIGENCE: "Marked by persevering; painstaking effort."

1. Diligence should become a habit in ALL we do.
 - a. We make an effort to be a diligent parent.
 - b. We make an effort to be a diligent worker on the job.
 - c. We make an effort to be a diligent worker in the kingdom of God.
2. It is interesting to note that the term "diligent" or some form of that word appears 62 times in God's word.
 - a. In fact, Solomon used some form of the term "diligent" eleven times in Proverbs.
 - b. The Biblical use of this term obviously makes it an important factor in man's life before God.
3. Some suggested verses from Proverbs speak of diligence versus the sluggard. For example:
 - a. Prov. 6:6-8, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: ⁷Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, ⁸Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."
 - b. I suggest that though we are annoyed by ants, our watching them go about their business so diligently does teach us a great lesson about our diligence in all we do.
4. The most appropriate verses from Proverbs that speak to our assigned subject are:
 - a. Prov. 4:23-27, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. ²⁴Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. ²⁵Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. ²⁶Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. ²⁷Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil."
5. A sermon could be made from these five verses:
 - a. The Lord said let our "Yeas be yeas and our Nays, nays." (Matt. 5:37)
 - b. John reminds us of "the lust of the eyes." (1 John 2:16)
 - c. Micah said the Lord requires us "to do justly...and to walk humbly." (Micah 6:8)
 - d. Moses said: "Ye shall observe to do therefore as the LORD your God hath commanded you: ye shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left." (Deut. 5:32)
6. The man or woman of God must consider these questions: "Are we diligent in all that we do before God? And, how do we demonstrate diligence in all that we do?"

7. We will use as the basis of our lesson: (Prov. 4:23) “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

DISCUSSION:

I. WE MUST DILIGENTLY HARKEN TO GOD’S WORD.

- A. Moses said: (Exodus 15:26) “If thou wilt diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD thy God, and wilt do that which is right in his sight, and wilt give ear to his commandments, and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee, which I have brought upon the Egyptians: for I am the LORD that healeth thee.”
1. The first step in diligence before God is understanding that He has all the right answers for our life.
 - a. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 - b. “According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:” (2 Peter 1:3)
 2. Paul said: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Tim. 2:15)
- B. Mankind has only one set of instructions that will help save him in that last day. (1 Tim. 1:3-4) “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, ⁴Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.”

II. WE MUST DILIGENTLY SEEK GOD.

- A. It is one thing to read our Bible; however, it is another to seek to obey the Source of the words.
1. (Heb. 11:6) “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”
 - a. Manifold numbers believe that God is, but never seek Him. Ask your neighbor; many say “Yes.”
 - 1) When asked if or where they worship they tell us they don’t.
 - 2) Their lives are centered around themselves.
 - 3) Their worship is of earthly things, prestige, power, entertainment, etc.

- b. Many believe, however seek Him incorrectly, because they don't harken to His word.
 - 1) Their worship is based on a cafeteria style religion — what I want.
- 2. Belief (faith) alone is not enough. True faith will diligently seek all there is to do to become a child of God and to find all we must do to please Him.
 - a. (Deut. 4:29) "But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul."

III. WE MUST DILIGENTLY OBEY GOD.

- A. There is no purpose in listening to God and seeking Him if we have no intention in obeying Him. (Deut. 6:17) "Ye shall diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God, and his testimonies, and his statutes, which he hath commanded thee." (Deut. 11:13) "And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul."
 - 1. Peter answered the Jewish leaders: (Acts 5:29) "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men."
 - 2. Paul said: (Rom. 6:16-17) "Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? ¹⁷But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

IV. WE MUST DILIGENTLY GUARD AGAINST DEFILEMENT.

- A. The purpose of diligently listening to God's word and seeking Him and obeying Him should be to conform our lives to His standards.
 - 1. We must be diligent against our mortal enemy: Satan.
 - a. 1 Peter 5:8, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"
 - b. James 4:7, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
 - 2. We must strive to be spotless: (2 Peter 3:14) "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."
 - 3. We must strive after perfection: (Heb. 12:15) "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any

root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.”

4. It must be a never-ending challenge: (Phil. 3:13-14) “Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, ¹⁴I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”
- B. Our purity depends on our diligent efforts to reach the prize of the high calling of God through our Lord, Jesus Christ.

V. WE MUST DILIGENTLY MAKE OUR SAFETY IN CHRIST SURE.

- A. Unlike the doctrine of some, there is the danger of our falling away.
 1. Peter implies that we could fall, therefore the need to make sure of our spiritual safety. (2 Peter 1:10) “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”
 2. Paul said it another way: (1 Cor. 9:27) “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.”
 3. Solomon said: (Prov. 4:23) “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”
- B. Since we can fall, it behooves us to give diligence to make our calling and election sure.

VI. WE MUST DILIGENTLY TEACH OUR CHILDREN.

- A. Probably one of the greatest failures in the Lord’s church today is failing to pass along to our children the same desire for diligence that the parent(s) might (should) have.
 1. God said: “And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.” (Deut. 11:19)
 2. Paul said: “And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” (Eph. 6:4)
 3. Our buildings are bare of young people unless they are bribed with entertainment.
 4. Many parents have not taught their children diligence in unique essentials of Christianity.
 - a. We have not taught the next generation the uniqueness of the *church*.

- b. We have not taught the next generation the uniqueness of the *plan of salvation*.
- c. We have not taught the next generation the uniqueness of correct *worship*.
- d. We have not taught the next generation the uniqueness of correct *fellowship*.

VII. WE ABOUND IN DILIGENCE BECAUSE DILIGENCE IS NOT IN VAIN.

- A. The many uses of the word through scripture implies diligence is of great importance to the man/woman of God. (2 Cor. 8:7) "Therefore, as ye abound in everything: in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also." (1 Cor. 15:58) "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

VIII. WE ABOUND IN DILIGENCE BECAUSE GOD REWARDS DILIGENCE.

- A. (Deut. 11:13-14) "And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto my commandments which I command you this day, to love the LORD your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul,¹⁴ That I will give you the rain of your land in his due season, the first rain and the latter rain, that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil."
- 1. God said His earthly blessings depend upon our harking diligently to His commandments.
 - 2. God's blessings in life depend on our serving Him with all our heart and soul.
 - 3. However, not only will God bless us with the things of this earth; but more importantly, He will bless us with the blessing of eternal life.
(Mark 10:30) "But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Strong diligence is required of our God:
 - a. Diligently seeking His Word.
 - b. Diligently seeking God, the Source of the Word.
 - c. Diligently obeying God.
 - d. Diligently guarding against our own defilement.
 - e. Diligently making our safety in Christ sure.

- f. Diligently teaching the next generation.
 - g. We do this because diligence is not in vain.
 - h. We do this because God rewards our diligence.
2. (Prov. 22:29) “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings....”
- a. May we all be diligent most especially in our spiritual lives.
 - b. Because the man or woman who is diligent in the business of the Lord will stand before the Creator and King of kings in the hereafter. What a wonderful day that will be.
-

THE DESCRIPTION OF TEMPTATION

Windell R. Fikes

1. **Description** defined by Webster Online as:
 - a. An act of *describing*; specifically discourse intended to give a mental image of something experienced .
 - b. A *descriptive* statement or account.
 - c. Kind or character especially as determined by salient features. Synonyms: *definition, delineation, depiction, sketch, picture, portrait, portraiture, portrayal, rendering, vignette.*
2. **Temptation:** The words “*tempt, temptation, temptations, tempted, tempter, tempteth and tempting*” is not found in the book of Proverbs [cf. Strong’s and Cruden’s Complete Concordances].
3. The concept or notion of “*temptation*” is found in abundance in the book of Proverbs.
4. The basic verb idea is “*be open, spacious, wide,*” and might relate to the immature or simple one who is open to all kinds of enticement, not having developed a discriminating judgment as to what is right or wrong.

The verb usage is seen in the tactics of Samson’s bride-to-be in wrangling the secret of his riddle...*Enticement* is described in terms of a man seducing a woman (Exod. 22:15). The immature are warned not be enticed by sinners (Prov. 1:10). Another arresting usage of enticement is what happens when a man refuses to follow God’s direction. He is enticed to do wrong to his ultimate hurt, a discipline or judgment of rejecting the Lord (2 Chron. 18:19-21).

To deceive carries almost the same idea as to entice...To be a witness against a neighbor without cause is to deceive with one’s lips (Prov. 24:28).

Simple, foolish — generally describes the naïve (not deranged) in Proverbs who must be well taught, since an immature person believes anything (Prov. 14:15).

To achieve moral and spiritual maturity, the naïve are encouraged to receive prudence (Prov. 1:4), to understand wisdom (Prov. 8:5), and to dwell where wisdom makes her home (Prov. 9:4). Otherwise, he may drift into *temptation* and then sin, immorality (Prov. 7:7ff), robbery, and murder (Prov. 1:10-14). Apart from godly tutelage, he is on the road to death (Prov. 7:7; 22:3). (*Bold italics for emphasis, wrf*)

(*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*; Vol. 2; Ed. R. Laird Harris; Associate Editors: Gleason Archer Jr.; Bruce K. Waltke; Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, 1980; TWOOT 1853a, pages 742, 743)

5. The writer of Proverbs twice employs a synonym, "entice", for "temptation".
- a. *My son, if sinners entice (emphasis, wrf) thee, Consent thou not.* (Prov. 1:10, ASV 1901 ASV)
 - b. *A man of violence enticeth, (emphasis, wrf) his neighbor, and leadeth him in a way that is not good.* (Prov. 16:29 1901 ASV) *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not* (Prov. 1:10). *Discretion shall preserve thee, understanding shall keep thee* (Prov. 2:11). *To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward things* (Prov. 2:12). *Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away* (Prov. 4:15). *Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee* (Prov. 4:25). *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established* (Prov. 4:26). *Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil* (Prov. 4:27). *Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise* (Prov. 20:1). *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man: he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich* (Prov. 21:17). *Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats* (Prov. 23:6). *For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee* (Prov. 23:7). *The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words* (Prov. 23:8). *Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh* (Prov. 23:20). *For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags* (Prov. 23:21). *Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes?* (Prov. 23:29). *They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine* (Prov. 23:30). *Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the cup, when it moveth itself aright* (Prov. 23:31). *At the last it biteth*

like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder (Prov. 23:32). Thine eyes shall behold strange women, and thine heart shall utter perverse things. ³⁴Yea, thou shalt be as he that lieth down in the midst of the sea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a mast (Prov. 23:33-34). They have stricken me, shalt thou say, and I was not sick; they have beaten me, and I felt it not: when shall I awake? I will seek it yet again (Prov. 23:35).

DISCUSSION:

I. TEMPTATION IS TO:

- A. *Allure* — Beguile “to catch by bait” — disguise the fishhook.
- B. *Entice* — to attract artfully or adroitly [skillfully] or by arousing hope or desire: tempt.
- C. *Attract* — “to draw by appeal to natural or excited interest, emotion, or aesthetic sense: entice <attract attention>.”
- D. *Charm* — “a trait that fascinates, allures, or delights.”
- E. *A portrait of temptation* — “a graphic portrayal in words.”

II. SIN IS BAIT DISGUISED TO LURE THE INNOCENT AND UNSUSPECTING.

- A. “...If sinners entice thee, consent not” — *do not follow; do not give-in to them.* (Prov. 1:10)
- B. Discretion [*good; sound judgment; thoughtfulness*] shall preserve thee, understanding [*a mental grasp, comprehension*] shall keep thee. (Prov. 2:11)
- C. To deliver thee from the way of the evil man, from the man that speaketh froward [*perverse*] things. (Prov. 2:12)
- D. Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. ¹⁵Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. (Prov. 4:14-15)
 1. “*Turn off the road of temptation.*”
 2. “*Don’t stop and take a look.*”
 2. “*Go the other way*” — “*Run.*” (Cf. Gen. 39:12)
- E. ²⁵Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. ²⁶Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. ²⁷Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil. (Prov. 4:25-27)
- F. Verses 25-27 summarized: *Keep your eyes on what is in front of you; survey the path of your feet, keep a clear path before you; don’t swerve to the right or left; watch your step; don’t sidetrack; always pull back your foot from danger.*

III. THE DESCRIPTION [PORTRAIT] OF INDULGENCE AND PLEASURE. (Prov. 20:1; 21:17; 23:6,7,8,20,21)

- A. *Whiskey* is the Devil in liquid form (Anonymous).
- B. *Appearance of wine*, booze and strong drink is beautiful.

1. Observe: Jack Daniels, Busch, and Coors, Ads and Advertising.
2. Parties; scantily dressed women; and sexual pleasures.

IV. THE DESCRIPTION [PORTRAIT] OF A DRUNKEN PERSON. (Prov. 23:29-35)

- A. Who hath woe? Who hath sorrow? Who hath contentions? Who hath babbling? Who hath wounds without cause? Who hath redness of eyes? (Prov. 23:29)
 1. A "paraphrase" version (v.29).
 "Who is crying out?" "Who has want?" "Who is brawling?" "Who has complaining, [lawsuits, LXX, Jerome]?" "Who gets the bruises without knowing why?" "Whose eyes are bloodshot?" "Who has a black eye?"
 2. Who has all these unnecessary difficulties? — Those who spend long hours in the taverns [bars] trying out new mixtures." [Kenneth Taylor] (v.30)
- B. Look not, i.e., do not consider, and anticipate enjoyment of the "tiny bubbles." (v.31)
- C. In the end it fills one's body with all kinds of poisons. (v.32)
- D. "Gutter imagination" "loose, loud, vulgar talk." (v.33)
- E. Inebriated, the drunk lies down in a perilously dangerous place but has no sense of danger, falling into the raging sea. (v.34)
- F. The drunkard now talks to himself — "look I'm beat-up but I don't hurt anywhere", he knows something has happened but the alcohol has deadened his pain. I'll sleep it off and go for another drink tomorrow! (v.35)

CONCLUSION:

1. ¹⁴But each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. ¹⁵Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin: and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death. (James 1:14-15 1901 ASV)
2. Just one drink, led to more drinks, a social drink now and then grows into regular social drinking at all occasions.
3. Drinking is sinful and progressive. Walk away from liquor. Run from the sight and smell of booze. If you don't — in the end it will bite you like a serpent and sting you like an adder and leave your body wrecked and soul ruined.
4. Without abstinence, repentance and turning to God, alcohol and strong drink will doom your soul with all the unrepentant drunkards of the ages into eternal torment. (cf. 1 Cor. 6:10; Gal. 5:21)

Recommended Book

The Bible and "Social" Drinking In-Depth Research of a Universal Problem by W. D. Jeffcoat; Publishing Designs, Inc.; Huntsville, AL; 2006 Edition

THE NEED TO CONTROL ANGER

Jimmy W. Bates

1. Prov. 16:32, "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."
 - a. "Better to be slow to anger than to be a mighty warrior, and one who controls his temper is better than one who captures a city." (New English Translation)
 - b. Living the Christian life requires self-control, self-discipline, which involves controlling anger.
 - c. "He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and with out walls." (Prov. 25:28)
2. The necessity of controlling anger and the danger of failing to do so, is a prominent theme in the Bible.
 - a. The word **anger** is used some 132 times in the Bible; 8 times in the Proverbs.
 - b. The word **wrath**, associated with anger, is used 197 times in the Bible; 16 times in the Proverbs.
 - c. Other words associated with anger, such as strife, contention, furious, fools, etc., appear numerous times in the Bible, especially in Proverbs.
3. We live in an out of control, angry world:
 - a. A world of war, strife, and fighting.
 - b. Domestic violence, work-place violence, school shootings, road rage.
 - c. Uncontrolled anger has resulted in the destruction of marriages and breakup of homes, abuse of children as well as spouse abuse.
 - d. Consider all the pain, suffering, death, and destruction caused by a "fit of anger."
4. May our study cause us to better understand and heed God's instructions concerning the need to control our anger!

DISCUSSION:

I. UNDERSTANDING THE EMOTION OF ANGER:

A. What is Anger?

1. It is part of the emotional make-up of a human being as God made us.
 - a. Emotion – any strong feeling: anxiety, awe, fear, happiness, hate, love, anger, etc.
 - c. Synonyms – rage, fury, indignation, wrath.
2. Anger is described as “intense displeasure.” thus an unpleasant emotion.
3. Just like any emotion, anger must be exercised within the guidelines of God’s instructions.

B. Definitions:

1. Heb. “*ebrah*” – “an outburst of passion: anger, rage, wrath.” – Strongs
 2. Heb. “*aph*” – involves the idea of the countenance of the face or nostril and the rapid breathing in passion, the appearance of anger, wrath, etc. – Strongs
 3. Grk. “*Thumos*” – most often translated “wrath.”
 - a. “...Indicates a more agitated condition of the feelings, an outburst of wrath from inward indignation...” – Vine
 - b. “...The blaze of temper which flares into violent words and deeds, and just as quickly dies.” – Barclay
 4. Grk. “*Orge*” – most often translated “anger.”
 - a. “Indignation which has arisen gradually and becomes more settled.” – Thayer
 - b. “Suggests a more settled or abiding condition of mind.” – Vine
 5. “Anger” – “1. a feeling of displeasure resulting from injury, mistreatment, opposition, etc., and usually showing itself in a desire to fight back at the supposed cause of this feeling...Syn.– **anger** broadly applies to feelings of resentful or revengeful displeasure; **indignation** implies righteous anger aroused by what seems unjust, mean, or insulting; **rage** suggests a violent outburst of anger in which self-control is lost; **fury** implies a frenzied rage and borders on madness; **ire**, chiefly a literary word, suggests a show of great anger in acts, words, looks, etc.; **wrath** implies deep indignation expressing itself in a desire to punish or get revenge.” – New World Dictionary
- C. Thus, all anger is not the same; it comes from a wide range of stages and degrees, depending on motives and degree of self-control or self-discipline.

II. A KIND OF ANGER THAT IS GOOD AND RIGHT:

- A. "Be ye angry and sin not." (Eph. 4:26)
1. Control your anger.
 - a. Don't let anger escalate into an outburst of sin – "blow off steam!"
 - b. Don't let, "the sun go down upon your wrath"; don't let it remain and become settled and lead to sin!
 2. Anger does bring temptations, but there is a difference in anger and sin.
- B. The anger of God and Christ:
1. God's anger is "righteous indignation" and is always a just reaction to evil (Rom. 1:18; 2:5-9).
 2. God is slow to anger (Neh. 9:17; Nahum 1:3).
 3. But, some things will kindle God's anger:
 - a. The affliction of widows and orphans – (Exod. 22:22-24)
 - b. Idolatry – (Exod. 32:7-10).
 - c. Grumbling and complaining (ingratitude) – (Num. 11:10; 1 Cor. 10:5-11).
 - d. All that forsake Him – (Ezra 8:22).
 - e. Those that follow their own way rather than God's way – (Psa. 106:39, 40).
 - f. Hypocrites – (Job 36:12, 13; Matt. 23).
 - g. He that believeth not – (John 3:36).
 - h. Disobedience – (Col. 3:5, 6; 2 Thess. 1:7, 8).
 - i. Offering excuses – (Exod. 4:14).
 - j. Those that compromise with evil – (Num. 22:22).
 - k. Uncorrected sin – (Josh. 7:1).
 4. Examples of the anger of Christ:
 - a. Those that hardened their hearts – (Mark 3:5).
 - b. Toward the money changers in the Temple – (John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12, 13).
 - c. Toward the hypocritical Pharisees – (Matt. 23:13ff).
 5. These examples show that the anger of Christ was not for His own self-interests but was holy anger against unrighteousness.
 - a. His anger was for God's honor and righteousness.
 - b. When He was personally abused, He refused to be provoked – (1 Peter 2:21-23).
- C. What makes God angry, should make us angry!
1. Our anger must always be controlled and never from our own self-interests.
 2. But, let us never look with indifference on those things that anger God; but have righteous indignation against all sin!

III. ANGER THAT IS DESTRUCTIVE AND SINFUL:

A. Uncontrolled Anger:

1. The hot-headed outburst of anger (Prov. 14:17, 29; 15:18; 16:32; Eccl. 7:9).
2. Must exercise discretion and control (Prov. 12:16; 19:11; 20:3).
 - a. Keep tongue controlled (Prov. 15:1; 21:23).
 - b. Understand the consequences of "flying off the handle" (Prov. 25:8; 29:20, 22; 30:33).
 - c. Don't associate with anger-prone people (1 Cor. 15:33; Prov. 22:24, 25).

B. Anger from an evil motive is sinful:

1. If motivated by hate or prejudice (Prov. 10:12; Jonah 4:1-11).
2. If motivated by jealousy (Cain, Gen.4; The elder brother, Lk. 15).
3. If motivated by an attitude of revenge (Prov. 20:22; 24:17, 29; 25:21, 22).
4. If motivated by the love of contention (Prov. 17:19; 20:3; 26:17, 21).

C. Anger exercised in opposing Truth and Right or in defending error and wrong doing:

1. Pharisees' anger toward Jesus for teaching Truth and doing Good (Matt. 21:45, 46; Luke 4:28, 29; John 7:23).
2. Anger at truth brought the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:51-60).
3. The Apostles often suffered abuse and ultimate death as a result of anger toward the Truth they preached.
4. Many people today become angry when they don't want to hear or accept the Truth on some doctrinal or moral subject.

CONCLUSION:

1. Let us understand the powerful and destructive temptations that come with anger and take heed to God's warnings to control our anger! (Psa. 37:8; Col. 3:8)
 2. Let us replace sinful anger and wrath with kindness and forgiveness! (Eph. 4:26, 27, 31, 32)
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VENGEANCE BELONGS TO THE LORD

Bryant Evans

1. The Vengeance of the Lord is a frightening subject. Yet it is a real and needful subject for righteous and unrighteous alike.
2. The subject of God's wrath and vengeance is found throughout the pages of Holy Writ. In the broader context of the full Bible, we find God's inspired reservation of judgment to himself.
 - a. Deut. 32:35, 41,43; Psalm 94:1; Isa. 34:8; Jer. 51:6
 - b. Ezek. 25:14; Micah 5:15; Rom. 12:19; Heb. 10:30
3. Several verses in Proverbs: Prov. 3:33; 11:3-5,7,21; 16:5.
4. We will note generally, that vengeance is the province of God and not the task of mankind. We will then turn to the ultimate vengeance to be poured out by the Almighty Creator.

DISCUSSION:

I. VENGEANCE IN THIS LIFE IS NOT FOR MAN.

A. Man does not have complete knowledge.

1. Socrates said, *"know nothing except the fact of my ignorance."* Sadly, many today do not even know that much. George Bernard Shaw quipped, *"Beware of false knowledge; it is more dangerous than ignorance."*
2. Such lack of knowledge is on grand display in the closing chapters of Job when God demands that Job answer the unanswerable questions known only to God (Job 38-41).

B. Man does not have full wisdom.

1. Job 38:2, men are reprov'd for their lack of wisdom and empty words.
2. Proverbs 1:2, the Proverbs of Solomon are to give wisdom to the one who reads and understands.
3. Proverbs 2:4, wisdom is valuable and is to be desired.
4. James 1:5, wisdom is freely given by God, for He is the source of true wisdom.
5. However, men often claim wisdom when in fact they are fools, Rom. 1:22; Psa. 14:1.

C. Man does not always control his own emotions.

1. Cain did not control his emotions and struck his brother in anger, slaying him (Gen. 4:1-16).
2. Moses did not control his emotions at Meribah, striking the rock instead of speaking as God commanded (Num. 20:1-13).
3. David's commander, Joab, rashly struck Abner dead in 2 Sam. 3:26-30.
4. Peter needlessly assailed the High Priest's servant, cutting off his ear (John 18:10).

II. VENGEANCE, IN THIS LIFE AND BEYOND, IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF GOD.

- A. God alone possesses the characteristics absent in man (Part I above).
 - 1. God is all-knowing (omniscient)
 - 2. God is all-present (omnipresent)
- B. God alone has a plan for the ages.
 - 1. Isa. 55:8-11
 - 2. Acts 2:23 illustrates the superiority of God's plans over man's.
 - a. No one would have thought of such a plan.
 - b. The very idea of the death of an innocent to save the wicked is unfathomable.
- C. God alone is pure in his righteousness.
 - 1. God is not given to uncontrolled rage but to righteous indignation (Psa. 7:11).
 - 2. Man is not; and of his own self, cannot be pure (Job 25:4; Prov. 20:9).
 - 3. Psalm 19:8 says God's commandments are pure. It is the violation of his commands that brings the wrath of God.

III. VENGEANCE MAY INVOLVE MAN AT GOD'S COMMAND.

- A. God *may* direct men to repay evil as his servant.
 - 1. There are many such examples in Scripture.
 - a. The Israelites were used by God to bring punishment upon the Canaanite nations (Exod. 3:17; 23:23; Num. 31:1-4).
 - b. The Israelites were also the object of God's vengeance at the hands of others (Josh. 2:11ff, esp. v.14).
 - 1) Assyria carried the northern tribes into captivity in 2 Kings 17:6.
 - 2) Babylon carried Judah away in 2 Kings 25.
 - 3) Rome ruled over Israel until they utterly destroyed it in 70 AD.
 - 2. Sometimes, however, God acts without men.
 - a. The great flood of Genesis 6-9 was in response to the wickedness and evil of men. Although He called upon Noah to save himself and his family and to preach while building the ark, the destruction was wrought by God's direct power alone.
 - b. 2 Kings 19:35, a single angel of the Lord struck 185,000 soldiers dead as they encamped against Judah.
- B. The important point is that God is always the director and the decisions of whom to strike, when to strike and where

to strike always belongs to God. Man is never entrusted with those decisions.

IV. ULTIMATE VENGEANCE AWAITS THE UNRIGHTEOUS.

- A. This old world does not simply end or cease to exist. God created man with a living soul (Gen. 2:7) and enabled him to live eternally.
- B. Eternal life is a blessing and a curse depending upon one's life. Matt. 19:29; 25:46; John 3:16; 5:24; Rom. 6:22; 2 Thess. 1:9; Jude 7
- C. Wise Solomon did not fail to warn of the consequences of the unrighteous life.
 1. In the passages we alluded to above, and others, we note the harsh language inspiration uses to describe the sinner.
 - a. Abomination (Prov. 3:32; 16:5)
 - b. Evil (Prov. 11:21; 24:20)
 - c. Perverseness (Prov. 11:3)
 - d. Treacherous (Prov. 11:3)
 - e. Wicked (Prov. 20:22; 11:5,7,21; 16:5)
 2. In every case, the wicked man has chosen a path that clashes with God, he has turned aside from truth and in doing so he has rejected wisdom (Prov. 1:7; 10:13,31; 12:8; 15:21,23).
- D. Christians would do well not to concern themselves with repaying evil in this life, but with the fear of eternal vengeance which comes upon those who do not know the Lord.
- E. Again, from Proverbs 20:22, God is our deliverer. He will bring us through struggles in his way and in his time. He seeks from us only our trust and obedience.

CONCLUSION:

1. Vengeance against evil individuals may seem like an appropriate form of justice, but it simply is not entrusted to man.
2. The Day of the Lord is coming. We have been warned.
3. There is great blessing for the righteous but justifiable wrath against the wicked.

Questions for Further Discussion

1. Can you remember any time in your own life when your judgments proved incorrect?
2. Christians are clearly called upon to make judgments from time to time. How do we prevent our judgments from becoming vengeance?
3. Which will cause more to be lost, ignorance or foolishness? Is there a difference?

4. Why do think God is justified in such anger against sin?
 5. Do you think the warning like those in Proverbs, are useful for modern men?
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Who Is A Fool?

Tom Snyder

1. Such an easy topic! The fool is the one that is:
 - a. In front of me going too slow while I am driving.
 - b. In front of me at a fast lane supermarket with 20 items and the limit is 10.
 - c. One who disagrees with me at work or school.
 - d. One who has made me late for work.
2. We so often have our own definition as to who is a fool.

DISCUSSION:

I. THE WORD "FOOL" DEFINED.

- A. The words used in the Proverbs (definitions from Strong's Concordance electronic version):
 1. *eviyl* (ev-eel'); from an unused root (meaning to be perverse); (figuratively) silly: fool (-ish) (man);
 2. *akal* (saw-kal'); for 3688; to be silly: KJV – do (make, play the, turn into) fool (-ish, -ishly, -ishness);
 3. *keciyl* (kes-eel'); from 3688; properly, fat, i.e. (figuratively) stupid or silly: fool (-ish);
 4. *nabal* (naw-bawl'); from 5034; stupid; wicked (especially impious): fool (-ish, -ish man, -ish woman), vile person.
- B. Words used in the New Testament:
 1. *moros* (mo-ros'); probably from the base of 3466; dull or stupid (as if shut up), i.e. heedless, (morally) blockhead, (apparently) absurd: fool (-ish, X -ishness);
 2. *aphron* (af-rone); from 1 (as a negative particle) and 5424; properly, mindless, i.e. stupid, (by implication) ignorant, (specially) egotistic, (practically) rash, or (morally) unbelieving: KJV– fool (-ish), unwise;
 3. *paraphroneo* (par-af-ron-eh'-o); from 3844 and 5426; to msthink, i.e. be insane (silly).
- C. Words that stand out in these definitions: silly, ignorant, mindless, unwise, rash.
- D. Who is naturally silly, ignorant, mindless?
 1. An infant, a little child.
 2. Grown infant because of birth defect or injury.

- E. Some others not so natural:
 1. What of one who is intoxicated by alcohol or other drugs?
 2. What of the one whose senses are overruled by anger?
 3. What of one who has given himself/herself over to illicit sexual passions?
- F. The fool is one that is grown up (mature) and can function as a grownup (mature) but refuses to do so.
 1. What happens to such a one or ones who marry?
 2. Does the fool make a leader of men?
 3. Does a fool make a role model for our youth?
 4. Do we like to meet such a one behind the wheel of a car?
- G. To survive and prosper in this world requires wisdom. The habitual fool is not suited for this world.

II. WHY IS THIS AN IMPORTANT MATTER? ISN'T BEING FOOLISH JUST ANOTHER LIFE CHOICE?

- A. The answer to this is found in the understanding of wisdom God has given.
- B. Revealed wisdom divides itself into two groups:
 1. Wisdom to benefit this life.
 - a. For health and life.
 - b. The good and abundant life one with another.
 - c. In this wisdom we see the value of work, of respect toward others, of child raising, of self-discipline.
 2. Wisdom to benefit our soul's life before God.
 - a. This overlaps with the above points for sure.
 - b. Wisdom is knowing God and keeping His commandments.
 - c. Wisdom is living under the control of God in every aspect of life.
- C. The fool is one who has ignored God and His ways for man.

III. WHO IS THE FOOL?

- A. Proverbs is a book of wisdom. It describes not only the wise man and who he is; but it describes the fool and who he is as well.
- B. Let us consider, mostly from Proverbs, what the Wise One says about the fool.
 1. The fool is a rejecter of God:

Psa. 14:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good."

Psa. 53:1, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. Corrupt are they, and have done abominable iniquity: there is none that doeth good."

2. The fool is one who acts as an animal:
Psa. 92:6, "A brutish man knoweth not; neither doth a fool understand this."
3. The fool is one who only follows his lust:
 - a. Prov. 7:22, "He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks."
 - b. Prov. 7:1-4, Admonition not to just know God's law but to put it in the heart.
 - c. Prov. 7:5, The reason for this: to avoid the "strange woman."
 - d. Prov. 7:10-13, This woman is a temptation and determined.
 - e. Prov. 7:18-20, She has her goals and desires.
 - f. Prov. 7:21-3, The fool's response and end.
 - g. Prov. 7:25, God's goal for man.
4. The fool is one who talks too much about nothing and everything:
Prov. 10:10, "He that winketh with the eye causeth sorrow: but a prating fool shall fall."
Prov. 29:11, "A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards."
5. The fool is one who slanders (defame; malign):
Prov. 10:18, "He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool."
6. The fool is one who works mischief (causing annoyance, trouble, or injury):
Prov. 10:23, "It is as sport to a fool to do mischief: but a man of understanding hath wisdom."
7. The fool is one that works in a place with a glass ceiling:
Prov. 11:29, "He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind: and the fool shall be servant to the wise of heart."
8. The fool is one that does no wrong in his own eyes:
Prov. 12:15, "The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise."
9. The fool is one who does not think about what he is doing, how his actions and words effect others, or how his words will be understood:
Prov. 14:16, "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil: but the fool rageth, and is confident."
10. The fool is one who will not accept instruction nor reproof:
Prov. 15:5, "A fool despiseth his father's instruction: but he that regardeth reproof is prudent;"
Prov. 17:10, "A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool."

Prov. 17:12, "Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly."

Prov. 18:2, "A fool hath no delight in understanding, but that his heart may discover itself."

Prov. 23:9, "Speak not in the ears of a fool: for he will despise the wisdom of thy words."

11. The fool is one who does not mind his own business:
 Prov. 20:3, "It is an honour for a man to cease from strife: but every fool will be meddling."
 Prov. 26:17, "He that passeth by, and meddleth with strife belonging not to him, is like one that taketh a dog by the ears."
12. The fool is one who sees no purpose to honor and dignity:
 Prov. 26:1, "As snow in summer, and as rain in harvest, so honour is not seemly for a fool."
 Prov. 26:8, "As he that bindeth a stone in a sling, so is he that giveth honour to a fool."
13. The fool is one that cannot be counted on:
 Prov. 26:6, "He that sendeth a message by the hand of a fool cutteth off the feet, and drinketh damage."
14. The fool is one who will not learn from his mistakes:
 Prov. 26:11, "As a dog returneth to his vomit, so a fool returneth to his folly."
15. The fool is one who thinks he has all the right answers (the "know it all"):
 Prov. 28:26, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered."

IV. A WORD OF CAUTION.

- A. Jesus is definite as to the non-use of the word fool:
 Matt. 5:22, "But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire."
- B. Many use this more often than they realize.
- C. The word is *moros* as in "moron" which means stupid, idiot, blockhead.
- D. This would mean that when we are behind that car going too slow for us and we call him stupid, we are calling him a fool. When we refer to our brethren as idiots or blockheads, we are calling them fools.
- E. The fool, as we have seen, has been identified for us, but the danger of hell fire is there for the one who calls someone a fool by his own standard.

CONCLUSION:

1. All of us have done foolish things and survived.
 2. Hopefully we learned by our mistakes.
 3. There is one thing we don't want to be a fool in, for we only get one chance to get it right: Luke 12:20, "But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"
 4. If we do not prepare to meet God we are the biggest fool of all. There are no second chances!
-

THE BLESSING OF LIBERALITY*Jeff Bates*

1. Abraham "looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." Heb. 11:10
 - a. Abraham's interest in material things was only in how those things could help him to seek spiritual things.
 - b. The hope of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was not in the things of this world, but in heaven. Heb. 11:13-16
2. Too many are hindered in their Christian life by the care of this world. Matt. 13:22; Mark 4:19
3. Materialism often leads children of God to being stingy in their Christian responsibilities; benevolence, edification, and evangelism.
4. Proverbs teaches the blessings of liberality in the Christian's God-given responsibilities.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **"THE LIBERAL SOUL SHALL BE MADE FAT." Prov. 11:25**
 - A. The Christian is expected to give liberally.
 1. He/she is to give liberally to support the work of the church. 1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 9:6-7
 2. He/she is to give liberally to those in need; benevolence.

Prov. 3:27-28; 22:9; James 2:14-17
 3. Liberal giving is righteous. Prov. 21:26
 - B. Giving liberally will result in one's being greatly blessed of God.
 1. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth." Prov. 11:24
 2. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." Prov. 11:25
 3. Luke 6:38

- C. This is not a promise that God will make one materially wealthy.
1. The Christian is promised the necessities of life, but is not promised material wealth. Matt. 6:25-34
 2. Material wealth can be a source of tremendous temptation to sin. 1 Tim. 6:9-11
 3. God will not bring such great temptation upon one who could not withstand it. 1 Cor. 10:13-14
 4. The Christian should be content with having the necessities of life. Prov. 30:7-9; 1 Tim. 6:8; Heb. 13:5
 5. The promise is that the liberal giver will be greatly blessed with spiritual blessings.
 6. Some godly individuals have been blessed with wealth, but they used the wealth for spiritual gain.
 - a. Job, Job 1:1-3; 42:10-17
 - b. Abraham, Gen, 13:2
 - c. Barnabas, Acts 4:34-37
- D. The worldly impulse is to hoard one's possessions.
1. This will ultimately lead to loss, not gain.
 2. "There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." Prov. 11:24
 3. Prov. 28:27
- E. Being liberal with my giving, lays up for me treasures in heaven. Matt. 6:19-21

II. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF LIBERALITY.

- A. The Israelites gave liberally for the building of the tabernacle. Exod. 35:20-29
- B. The first century Christians gave liberally for the Christians who were in need of the necessities of life. Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-37
- C. The Christians of Macedonia gave liberally for the needy Christians of Judea. 2 Cor. 8:1-5
- D. A poor widow was liberal in her giving.
 1. Mark 12:41-44
 2. One does not have to be rich to be a liberal giver.
 3. Nor does one have to be rich, to be stingy and covetous.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christians must be liberal, not only in the giving of their material possessions, but also in the giving of their time and abilities. Matt. 25:14-30; Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5
 2. The Christian will never "out-give" God. James 1:17
 3. Do I trust God to bless me for my liberality?
-

THINGS THAT ARE AN ABOMINATION TO GOD

Kenneth Burleson

1. God is capable of hating and loving.
2. In this lesson our study will center upon "Things that are an abomination to God," as found in the book of Proverbs.
3. Many of these things are considered, by many people, as small sins.
4. Sin will cause people to be lost, therefore, there are no little sins.
5. Hate defined: To abhor, to detest.
6. Abominable defined: To detest, abhor, despise and loathe.

DISCUSSION

I. SEVEN ABOMINATIONS THE LORD HATES. Prov. 6:16-19

- A. A PROUD LOOK: It means to be, haughty, arrogant, to inflate with self-conceit and high-minded.
 1. Pride is condemned throughout the book of Proverbs. Prov. 13:10; 16:5; 16:18; 21:4; 29:23
 2. Nations are condemned because of pride. Judah (Jer. 13:9), Israel (Hosea 5:5), Egypt (Eccl. 30:6), Edom (Obadiah 1:3), Babylon (Jer. 50:29)
 3. Individuals are defiled with pride.
 - a. It causes people to falsely accuse. 1 Sam. 17:28
 - b. It causes some to stir up strife. Prov. 13:10; 28:25
 - c. Mark 7:20-23
 - d. It causes some not to seek God. Psalms 10:4; 2 Thess. 2:3
 4. Used in the bad since in scripture. 2 Tim. 3:2; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5
- B. A LYING TONGUE.
 1. Defined: The act of telling a lie, the habit of telling lies, the act of deceiving.
 2. It seems to be an accepted thing.
 3. This is a common sin, one's word is not any longer his bond. Therefore, binding contracts.
 4. Telling a lie is always wrong, though some believe it is right to lie if it benefits them. Rev. 21:8
 5. Lying is not imitating Christ, He is the embodiment of truth. John 8:32; 17:17
- C. HANDS THAT SHED INNOCENT BLOOD.
 1. Murdering of the innocent.
 2. This is not war, or capital punishment. 1 Sam. 15:3,9; Gen. 6:9; Rom. 13:1-8
 3. The killing of unborn babies, by abortion.

4. It is a work of the flesh. Gal. 5:21
 5. Murderers will be lost eternally. Rev. 21:8
- D. AN HEART THAT DEVISETH WICKED IMAGINATIONS.
1. Defined: Always scheming, thinking and planning something evil. An example: Gen. 6:5
 2. The Lord spoke concerning this sin. Matt. 15:19,20
 3. It always begins in the heart. Matt. 15:18; 12:35-37
 4. We should have a pure heart. Matt. 5:8; Phil. 4:8; 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Peter 3:1; 1 John 3:3
- E. FEET THAT BE SWIFT IN RUNNING TO MISCHIEF.
1. Defined: Those running from place to place and person to person stirring up trouble.
 2. This is done by spreading rumors, falsehoods, lies, by gossip and talebearing.
 3. This describes wickedness. Acts 13:10
 4. We must be careful as to which way we turn our feet. Prov. 4:26,27
 - a. Lot turned his feet in the wrong direction. Gen. 13:5-12
 - b. Jonah went in the wrong direction. Jonah 1:1,
 5. Sin is progressive. Psalms 1:1
 - a. Anger leads to violence.
 - b. Covetousness leads to stealing. Eph. 4:28
 - c. Lust leads to fornication and adultery. Matt. 5:28; 19:9
- F. A FALSE WITNESS THAT SPEAKETH LIES.
1. Defined: One who bears a false report.
 2. It is listed among the Ten Commandments. Exodus 20:16
It is mentioned again in Matt. 19:16-19.
 3. It is a sin that comes from the heart. Matt. 15:19
 4. Paul mentions it when he deals with the law of love. Romans 13:9
 5. It is always associated with lying.
 6. Christians must not speak falsely in any matter.
 - a. The punishment for lying is declared in Rev. 21:8.
 - b. Even knowing the punishment, yet, many continue to do it.
- G. HE THAT SOWETH DISCORD AMONG BRETHREN.
1. Discord: dissension, strife, quarreling, brawling or contentious. Therefore, he that sows discord among the brethren is one who causes division.
 2. Paul taught those who do such should be marked. Romans 16:17,18
 3. The word discord appears two times in the Bible. Proverbs 6:12-14; Proverbs 6:19
 4. God is not pleased with division. Our Lord prayed for unity. John 17:20,21
 5. The apostle Paul spoke about the need for unity. 1 Corinthians 1:10-13; Ephesians 4:4-6

6. Several things are behind divisions:
 - a. Where anger is not controlled. Eph. 4:26
 - b. Where tattlers and busybodies run rampant. 1 Tim. 5:13
 - c. Envy. Prov. 14:30. "For he knew that for envy they had delivered him." Matt. 27:18
 - d. Where there is a lack of love. Prov. 10:12
 - e. Love is a uniter.

II. OTHER ABOMINATIONS IN PROVERBS.

A. THE FROWARD.

1. Defined: not easily managed, wilful, contrary.
2. A froward generation. Deut. 3:20,21
3. "The pure show themselves pure and with the froward thou shalt show thyself froward." Psa. 18:26
4. One that speaks froward things. Prov. 2:12
5. The froward is an abomination. Prov. 3:32
6. The froward mouth. Prov. 4:24
7. They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord. Prov. 11:20
8. A froward man soweth strife. Prov. 16:28

B. PRAYERS CAN BE AN ABOMINATION. Prov. 28:9; James 4:1-3

C. WICKEDNESS IS ABOMINATION. Prov. 8:7

1. The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination. Prov. 15:8; 1 Sam. 15:22,23
2. The way of the wicked is an abomination. Prov. 15:9
3. The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination. Prov. 15:26; Phil. 4:8

D. A FALSE BALANCE IS ABOMINATION. Prov. 11:1; 20:10,23

CONCLUSION:

1. Since God hates these things and they are an abomination to Him, shouldn't we hate them?
 2. God is opposed to these things, if we practice them we are opposed to God.
 3. Those who practice such until they pass from this life will be lost eternally.
 4. It should challenge us to remain free of all these evils and hate them as God does.
-

REASONS TO REJOICE

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

1. We live in a world in which there is sadness, sorrow and suffering, heaviness and heartaches.
2. God made us capable of laughter, joy and happiness.
3. Proverbs supplies us with Scriptural reasons to rejoice.
4. Paul, in Philippians, wanted the precious people at Philippi to rejoice. He supplied the realm in which we are to rejoice — “in the Lord” (Phil. 4:4)

DISCUSSION:

I. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN WISDOM.

- A. Wisdom is the keynote of the Book of Proverbs.
- B. Solomon, the human penman, was the wise man of the Old Testament. He was the “Wisest of the Ages.”
- C. Only Jesus exceeded him in wisdom. In Matthew 12:42 Jesus declared “a greater than Solomon is here.” He spoke of Himself.
- D. “A wise man will hear, and will increase in learning, and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels” (Prov. 1:5).
- E. “Happy is the man that findeth wisdom and the man that getteth understanding” (Prov. 3:13).
- F. Proverbs 8 majors so beautifully in wisdom.
 1. In this chapter we have the fame, evidence, excellency nature, power, riches and the eternity of wisdom (*Dickson New Analytical Bible*, p.752).
 2. A number of students of this chapter feel that herein is a personification of Christ and His wonderful wisdom. I am of this number.

II. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN BORNE RELATIONSHIPS.

- A. The husband should “rejoice with the wife of his youth” (Prov. 5:18-19).
- B. Parents should rejoice in setting proper examples before them and teaching truth to their children.
- C. Children will be happier if they obey the parental teaching of truth (Prov. 7:1-2).

III. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN THE WISDOM OF INDUSTRY.

- A. Slothfulness is folly and a waster (Prov. 18:8).
- B. Solomon described the slothful man in Proverbs 24:30-34.
- C. Laziness is unbecoming of any servant of the Lord.

IV. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN THE WISDOM OF SOBRIETY.

- A. I use sobriety in a modern sense of remaining aloof for all alcoholic beverages and harmful drugs. Proverbs 20:1 tells us why.
- B. Strong drink is destructive and robs one of true happiness (Prov. 23:29-32).

V. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN THE WISDOM OF HONESTY.

- A. This is the sure way of attaining and maintaining a good name (Prov. 22:1).
- B. Dishonesty is an abomination to God (Prov. 11:1).
- C. "The way of the upright is to depart from evil" (Prov. 16:17).

VI. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN VIRTUE.

- A. The "virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness to his bones" (Prov. 12:4).
- B. In Proverbs 31:1-31 we have a precious portrait of the virtuous or worthy woman.
- C. Man should be eager to be virtuous or worthy as well.

VII. WE SHOULD REJOICE IN THE WISDOM OF RESPECTING THE INTEGRITY OF GOD'S WORD.

- A. In Proverbs 30:5 we are told, "Every word of God is pure..."
- B. Warning is given in Proverbs 30:6 relative to adding to God's Word. God means what He says about this matter.
- C. Kindred passages along this very line are found in Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18-19.
- D. The Amplified Bible added.
- E. The Reader's Digest Bible subtracted.
- F. Human creeds should be rejected because they add, subtract, alter, modify and substitute (Mark 1:7ff).
- G. The great preacher, Benjamin Franklin, presented this case against human creeds.
 1. If they contain more than the Bible, we reject them because they contain too much.
 2. If they contain less than the Bible, we reject them because they contain too little.
 3. If they differ from the Bible, we reject them because they are different.
 4. If they are just like the Bible, we reject them because they are superfluous. We already have the Bible and do not need something just like it.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Psalmist said, "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day" (Psa. 119:97).

2. Jesus said, "If ye know these thing, happy are ye if you do them" (John 13:17)!
-

RESPECT FOR THE OLDER GENERATION

Prov. 16:31; Prov. 20:29

Tom House

1. Since experience is considered to be one of life's great teachers, one might be led to wonder what kind of childhood Solomon might have had.
2. He did note that he was the 'son of his father,' who incidentally, was David, the second king of Israel. Prov. 4:3
 - a. There is more stated in the text than the mere reference to David being Solomon's progenitor.
 - b. Solomon spoke of David as his father; not as king.
 - c. The subsequent verses reveal that David taught him and urged upon him the very principles he is now transferring to his own son.
3. So long as Solomon would have followed his father's sage advice, all would have been well with him.
4. However, as the record will indicate, Solomon developed a lack of respect for the wisdom passed to him by his father, lost sight of the counsel of the wisdom given to him by God, and thereby making his life a series of debacles.
5. Solomon's imprudent behavior is not unique to him, for there is not a single living soul who could truthfully testify that he or she has been immune from foolish choices and exhibiting disrespect.
6. One might not be prone to think that such a subject would be considered as important enough to rank any notice in inspiration; but it is.

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS IMPLIED BY THE CONCEPT OF RESPECT?

- A. The English word 'respect' is defined on the basis of its grammatical context.
 1. As a verb, it means:
 - a. To have deferential regard for; esteem;
 - b. To treat with propriety or consideration.
 2. As a noun, it is defined as:
 - a. Regard for and appreciation of worth; honor and esteem;
 - b. Courteous regard.

- B. The term 'honor' serves as an appropriate synonym, as it is defined as 'high regard or esteem,' or 'to treat with courtesy.'
- C. It is a well observed truth that we are living in an age when the very idea of common courtesy is a rare commodity.
 - 1. However, the lack of courtesy is generally noticed by every older generation.
 - 2. It would be difficult to assess with any degree of certainty how the present generation ranks with its predecessors.
 - 3. It will likely be similar in most respects.
- D. These observations bring to mind, however, the ever present lack of respect shown to the older generation of citizens.

II. THE THOUGHT PROCESS OF THE YOUNGER GENERATION.

- A. As noted, it is a most common assessment that the younger generations who show little or no respect for the older.
- B. The pressing question is 'why does this remain a persistent generational problem?'
- C. There are other equally important questions to consider:
 - 1. Are the young not taught to be respectful?
 - 2. Is it the case that the older are undeserving or unworthy?
 - 3. What is the thinking which prompts the disrespect?
- D. The older, once having been of the younger generation, should be able to provide an insight to the kind of thinking which leads to disrespect.
 - 1. Many young people are of the disposition that they possess greater intelligence.
 - a. These are those who aptly fit Solomon's description of a fool in Proverbs 12:15, for they do that which is 'right in his own eyes;' hence they exhibit little humility. Prov. 15:31-33
 - b. As a consequence, they have little tendency to want to listen to experienced advice. Prov. 15:5,12
 - c. Those given to such stubbornness will generally be the poorer. Prov. 13:8,18
 - d. Likewise, these disrespectful ones are usually self-destructive. Prov. 15:10
 - 2. Many of the younger generation only want what the older can provide them.
 - a. They covet the possessions or the riches of the older. Prov. 8:10-11

- b. In many instances, they would prefer the gain without the labor, and are uninterested in the admonitions to work for themselves. Prov. 13:11
- 3. Because the younger are generally stronger, the tendency is to consider the older as weak in every respect, and will often take advantage of the older, or will take opportunity to belittle or ridicule them. Prov. 20:29 — ‘glory’ — *‘tipharah,’* meaning ‘beauty, bravery, honor.’ Note 2 Kings 2].
- E. Consider some examples of those who showed disrespect.
 - 1. Joseph’s brothers showed little respect for their father Jacob by misleading him concerning Joseph’s fate. Gen. 37
 - 2. When Rehoboam ‘forsook the counsel of the old men’ in favor of his peers, the nation of Israel was divided. 1 Kings 12
 - 3. Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, were described as the ‘sons of Belial.’ 1 Sam. 2:12,22-25
 - 4. The people of Israel showed no more respect to Samuel as did his own sons. 1 Sam. 8:1-5
 - 5. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees for upholding their tradition of ‘corban,’ rather than ‘honoring’ their parents. Mark 7
- F. It is comforting to know, however, that there are examples of younger ones who were respectful to the older.
 - 1. Jesus serves as a prime of respectful behavior. Luke 2:51-52
 - 2. Timothy must have been greatly respectful to his mother and grandmother. 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15

III. WHY SHOULD THE OLDER BE RESPECTED?

- A. In general terms, the older should be respected because of their vast experiences.
 - 1. Having noted earlier that experience is one of life’s great teachers, the collection of experiences, pleasant and unpleasant, should be the seed of wiser choices.
 - 2. Consequently, is it not interesting that it is Solomon, and not his son, who is providing the value of his experiences?
 - 3. Experience taught Solomon that there are consequences to one’s choices.
 - a. He notes that whatever he desired, he got; what he wanted to do, he did; and discovered in the process, that there was nothing gained by it. Eccl. 2:10-11
 - b. He had seen every work ‘under the sun,’ and determined that it was ‘vanity and vexation of spirit.’ Eccl. 1:14

- c. Not only had he learned from the consequences of his own mistakes, but witnessed the same folly in others. Eccl. 10:6-7
 - d. The older have greater storehouse of memories; and know that history has a tendency to be repeated. Eccl. 11:8
4. Yet how many older ones have offered sage warnings to the young as did Solomon, only to be received with indignation or indifference.
- B. The older should also be respected for the following reasons:
1. They generally possess greater patience.
 - a. The younger generation is seldom satisfied with anything, and is quickly bored.
 - b. When circumstances circumvent their schedule and lifestyle, they will more times than not, react in a spoiled rage.
 - c. To be 'patient' is defined in the English as 'possessing or demonstrating quiet, uncomplaining endurance under distress or annoyance.'
 - d. James states, "let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect, and entire, wanting nothing." James 1:4
 - e. The word 'perfect' in the passage is from '*teleios*,' meaning 'complete, of full age, or mature.'
 2. They generally possess greater knowledge.
 - a. The young will generally not seek out the older for knowledge unless they have no other recourse.
 - b. For some, seeking counsel after having formerly rejected it, may find it difficult to obtain it. Prov. 1:29-33
 - c. The older are generally better learned in spiritual knowledge. Prov. 2:1-6
 3. With greater knowledge, particularly the spiritual, usually comes greater faith.
 - a. The mark of a mature person is one who never stops growing spiritually. 2 Peter 3:18
 - b. Those who have little or no respect for the mature in faith, are those who have little or no respect for their own soul. Prov. 15:32-33

CONCLUSION:

1. To the young who may be content to do things their own way, without respect to the counsel of the older; Solomon provides some scathing sarcasm. Eccl. 10:9-10
2. He will then offer words of sage advice. Eccl. 12:1

3. Solomon also indirectly admonishes the older to be prudent in behavior, that the younger will have someone whom they might respect. Prov. 16:31
 - a. "The hoary head is a crown of glory, IF...."
 - b. "It be found in the way of righteousness."
-

CONTENTMENT

Alan Adams

1. There is only once instance of a form of the English word, "contentment," in our standard versions (KJV, ASV) of the Book of Proverbs.
 - a. Speaking of the "jealousy" and "rage" of the husband of an adulteress, Solomon said, "He will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; Neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts" (Prov. 6:32ff, 35).
 - b. The nuanced concept, though, permeates the book.
 - c. It reminds us somewhat of the absence of the word, God, in the Book of Esther.
 - d. One could make the case that contentment is this great Book of Proverbs.
2. Contentment is what everybody wants, but so few have.
 - a. People spend millions, if not billions, on books and experts in a quest for contentment.
 - b. What an irony to witness discontented men advising discontented men. — "My son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh" (Eccl. 12:12).
 - c. "The Preacher" thus said, being "wise he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he pondered, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, and that which was written uprightly, even words of truth. The words of the wise are as goads; and as nails well fastened are the words of the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd" (9-11).
3. What a tragedy.
 - a. Most publications of our standard English Bibles all strike at about the same place, when opened right in the middle.
 - b. That is, the middle will fall somewhere among the books: Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon.

1. The Book of Job shows that in a world of often-inexplicable vicissitudes, man's only rational option is implicit faith in God and the integrity of God.
 2. Psalms, like an amazing harp, is strung with the cords of every human emotion.
 3. Ecclesiastes deals with the folly of man's trying to assess and attribute value apart from divine revelation.
 4. The Song of Solomon deals with the beauty of intimate and loyal love.
 5. The Book of Proverbs, a composition of pithy, powerful moral imperatives, serves as a thinking man's Code of Conduct.
4. "Godliness with contentment is great gain" (1 Tim. 6:6).
- a. It is not the case that "godliness is a way of gain," rather that "godliness" coupled with "contentment" is (cf. v. 5).
 - b. Let us then consider this Book of Proverbs, this great Code of Conduct, to learn how we may pursue and obtain contentment.

DISCUSSION:

I. CONTENTMENT DEFINED.

- A. The New Oxford American Dictionary says that the adjective, 'content,' means:
 1. "In a state of peaceful happiness."
 2. "Satisfied with a certain level of achievement, good fortune, etc., and not wishing for more."
- B. The New American Heritage, 5th Edition says,
 1. Desiring no more than one has, satisfied;
 2. Ready to accept or acquiesce, willing;
 3. Satisfaction.
- C. The "Cadillac" Oxford English Dictionary says,
 1. Satisfaction, pleasure, happiness;
 2. Satisfaction in mind, calm, quiet;
 3. Satisfied, gratified;
 4. Satisfied, feel that something is enough for, acquiesce.

II. CONTENTMENT DELINEATED.

- A. The common thread joining the nuances of content, contentment, is the idea of "satisfied, satisfaction."
- B. There is the satisfaction that flows from pleasure, happiness, and gladness. Speaking of "children of youth," Inspiration says, "Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them" (Psalm 127:4,5).
- C. There is the satisfaction that is concomitant with peace, quietness, and calmness of mind. "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another" (Mark 9:50). "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye may have

peace. In the world ye have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33).

- D. There is satisfaction in acquiescence.
1. Regarding the quantity of our possessions. “Godliness with contentment is great gain: for we brought nothing into the world, for neither can we carry anything out; but having food and covering we shall be therewith content” (1 Tim. 6:6-8; cf. Luke 3:14).
 2. Regarding the reality that things are as they are, that there are things over which we have limited or no control. “Who by the power of God are guarded through faith unto a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, ye have been put to grief in manifold trials, that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 1:5-7; cf. Phil. 4:11; Heb. 13:5).

III. CONTENTMENT PROCURED THROUGH THE PROVERBS.

- A. Let us know the satisfaction that comes from...
1. The wife of one’s youth (5:19).
 2. One’s speech and doings (12:14; 18:20).
 3. One’s righteousness and goodness (13:25; 14:14).
 4. Reverence for God, knowledge regarding that about which there can be no greater (19:23; 28:14; 29:18).
 5. Hard work (20:13).
 6. Knowledge of the eternal, spiritual (27:20; cf. 2 Cor. 4:18).
 7. Knowing when enough is enough (30:15,16).
- B. Let us know the gladness, happiness that comes from...
1. Raising a wise child (10:1).
 2. Living a life of hope (10:28).
 3. Obtaining wisdom (3:13, 18).
 4. Being compassionate (14:21; 16:20; 17:5).
- C. Let us know the peace of acquiescing.
1. To God’s dealing with our enemies (16:7; 24:17).
 2. To one’s plight in life, when it cannot be helped (15:16).

CONCLUSION:

1. Contentment is not an elusive state of life and mind, anymore than are any of God’s promises and blessings.
2. Neither is contentment a “state of mind,” that one can simply will himself to have.
3. Inspiration’s great Code of Conduct, the great Book of Proverbs, has shown us the way.

PERILS OF GREED

Bill Davis

Prov. 15:27, "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live."

1. The Problem of greed manifests itself in many ways in America today.
 - a. On Friday, November 28, 2008 at a Long Island Wal-Mart an employee was trampled to death as shoppers smashed through the doors.
 - b. In Fruitport Township, authorities say a teenage girl was trampled at a western Michigan store and suffered minor injuries after getting caught in a rush to a sale in the electronics department.
 - c. In Los Angeles, authorities said a woman shot pepper spray to keep shoppers from merchandise she wanted during a Black Friday sale, and 20 people suffered minor injuries.
 - d. In Northern California, authorities said a Black Friday shopper is in critical but stable condition after being shot by armed robbers outside a store.
 - e. In North Carolina, one man was arrested after a holiday shopping scuffle at a store in Kinston which police quelled with pepper spray.
 - f. In central Florida, a man is behind bars after a fight broke out at a jewelry counter during Black Friday.
 - g. In the Toledo suburb of Oregon, police responded to three separate reports of fighting at a store on Thursday night. One of the fights was over towels selling for \$1.88.
 - h. Obviously, these people were motivated by greed!
2. What is greed?
 - a. The Greek word used for "greed" is *pleonexia*: "greediness, insatiableness, avarice, covetousness," literally "a desire to have more."
 - b. Wikipedia says greed is the inordinate desire to possess wealth, goods, or objects of abstract value with the intention to keep it for one's self, far beyond the dictates of basic survival and comfort. It is applied to a markedly high desire for and pursuit of wealth, status, and power.
 - c. The World English Dictionary states that greed is a strong desire for more: an overwhelming desire to have more of something such as money than is actually needed.
 - d. Greed is covetousness. Covetousness is a wrongful and sinful desire for that which is not ours. Covetousness usually expresses itself in one of four ways: 1) the way we go about trying to gain things, 2) the way we go about trying to keep things, 3) a failure on our part in wanting to share things,

and 4) a sinful and wrong desire for things even if such cannot be gained.

DISCUSSION:

I. GREED IS DECEPTIVE.

- A. Deception — Wealth brings lasting satisfaction.
1. Eccl. 5:10, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.”
 - a. The more a person loves things the less they will satisfy the person.
 - b. It is like a thirsty man drinking saltwater.
 2. God described the greedy leaders of Israel as never being satisfied (Isa 56:11). Greed can never be satisfied no matter how much it has.
 3. Ahab was deceived by things, by the desire for more (1 Kings 21:1-7).
 - a. Ahab wanted Naboth’s vineyard but Naboth refused.
 - b. Because Naboth refused, Ahab went into a state of depression (1 Kings 21:5-7).
 - c. Jezebel schemed in order to defraud Naboth of his vineyard and in the process, Naboth was murdered (1 Kings 21:8-10).
 - d. Ahab and Jezebel thought they had pulled off the perfect crime, but they were wrong. Covetousness was going to cost them their lives. They would die in shame in a hideous way (1 Kings 21:21-24).
- B. Deception — The poor are not greedy, only the rich.
1. Eccl. 5:10, “He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity.”
 - a. Anyone can have an insatiable desire for more regardless of their economic or financial condition.
 - b. Poverty is no guarantee against greed. Greed isn’t limited to affluent people. In fact, poverty is a breeding ground for a lust for money.
 - c. People with less, often struggle more with greed than those who live in abundance. They spend hours dreaming and scheming of how to strike it rich. They’re consumed by how to make a quick dollar, winning the lottery, or criticizing people who have more than they have. They’re convinced money will make them deliriously happy.
 2. The writer of Proverbs recognizes the dangers as he prays, “Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: Lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the

LORD? or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain." (Prov. 30:8-9)

- a. Barnes comments, "The prayer foreshadows that which we have been taught by the Divine Wisdom: Give us, day by day, our daily bread."
 - b. Extremes of social life are usually not good for a man.
 - c. It brings to mind what Paul said in 1 Timothy 6:8, "And having food and raiment let us be therewith content."
- C. Deception — I should do whatever it takes to become wealthy.
1. A survey was taken asking people what they'd be willing to do for \$10 million.
 - 3 % of parents said they would put their children up for adoption.
 - 16% said they would leave their spouse.
 - 25% said they would abandon their family forever.
 - 23% said they would become a prostitute for a week.
 - a. Our love for money will determine what we would be willing to do to obtain it.
 - b. The writer of Hebrews exhorts us to be free from the love of money (Heb. 13:5 ASV).
 - c. Your level of satisfaction and fulfillment in life is the greatest indicator of how greed is affecting or not affecting you.
 - d. Greed struggles with contentment and when it has its talons in your heart, mind, and wallet enough is never enough.
 2. Greed drives people in desperation and sometime bizarre behavior.
 - a. One article stated, As the price of gold has risen to unprecedented heights, thieves have taken notice. In Oakland, police say dozens of women have had gold necklaces yanked from their necks on the street. More than 100 similar thefts have been reported in Los Angeles, a rash of robberies is taking place in St. Paul, Minn., and police in Phoenix say muggers chatted up high school girls then ripped their gold necklaces from them. "We've never seen this," said (one) Oakland police Sgt.
 - b. Police say that right now identity theft in the United States is at epidemic levels and it is getting worse. Shantel Moore, 29, worked for Methodist Hospital in Houston. The police say she stole identity information from cancer patients using the reasoning that they wouldn't be here long anyway so it would not matter.

- c. One grandmother in Florida has been accused of trying to sell her newborn grandson for \$75,000.
- d. A Vancouver, Washington woman has been charged with trying to sell her newborn baby in front of a Taco Bell.

II. GREED IS DESTRUCTIVE.

Prov. 15:27, "He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live."

A. Greed is destructive to the Nation.

1. Almost ten years ago the National Gambling Impact Study Commission funded a study to determine the overall cost to society posed by problem and pathological gamblers in the United States. The results showed that approximately \$5 billion was lost annually, with an additional \$40 billion in lifetime costs for productivity reductions, social services and creditor losses. Studies have concluded that two out of three pathological gamblers commit illegal acts in order to pay gambling-related debts. This places a hardship on our legal systems, prison systems and public assistance programs.
2. Prov. 22:8, "He that soweth iniquity shall reap vanity..."
3. Prov. 14:34, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."

B. Greed is destructive to the Home.

1. Prov. 28:22, "He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him."
 - a. Money is a factor in 90% of divorces.
 - b. The average American family carries nearly \$8,000 in credit card debt.
2. When the McGugarts of New York won a million dollars they were happy. Pop was a steamfitter. Johnny, twenty-six, loaded crates on docks. Tim was going to night school. Pop split the million with his sons. They all said the money wouldn't change their plans. A year later the boys weren't speaking to Pop, or each other. Johnny was chasing expensive race horses; Tim was catching up with expensive girls. Mom accused Pop of hiding his money from her. Within two years, all of them were in court for nonpayment of income taxes and the boys were on their way to becoming alcoholics.
3. Billie Bob Harrell Jr. hit the \$37 million dollar Texas jackpot in 1997 only to end his own life less than two years later when he realized that it was too late to fix the strained marriage.

4. Achan became obsessed with greed (Josh. 7:21).
 - a. He knew what he had done was wrong; so he hid what he had taken.
 - b. He destroyed his family because of greed (Josh. 7:24-25).
- B. Greed is destructive to the Soul.
 1. 1 Tim 6:6-10
 - a. The love of money is covetousness and covetousness can be traced all the way back to the Garden of Eden. Eve coveted the forbidden fruit.
 - b. Many today follow in her footsteps coveting that which they do not have.
 - c. Paul gives us warning here concerning materialism and greediness.
 - d. Greed destroys us spiritually.
 - e. He says this sin will drown men in destruction and perdition (v.9).
 - f. The word destruction here means, ruin, destroy, death.
 - g. No one can maintain a right relationship with God and be controlled by greed at the same time.
 2. Balaam was a covetous man. He was willing to lower his standards and compromise principle in order to gain more (2 Peter 2:15; Jude 1:11).
 - a. Balaam did two wrongs. First, he coveted money. Second, he led Israel into sin.
 3. Gehazi was a man who had potential, but he failed to guard his heart from covetousness.
 - a. He coveted what Naaman had brought to give to Elisha. But when Elisha refused Naaman's gifts, Gehazi could not stand the idea of not taking advantage of all that prosperity (2 Kings 5:20).
 - b. But what Gehazi did was not hidden from Elisha (2 Kings 5:25-27).
 - c. Gehazi plagued himself and his seed with leprosy because of the sin of greed.

CONCLUSION:

1. Greed is what ruined Lot. Greed is what lured Demas away from Paul. Greed destroyed Judas, and it threatens us today.
 2. Our prayer should be the same as that of the Psalmist:

Psa. 119:36, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness."

Psa. 119:36 (ESV), "Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!"
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THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEKING WISE COUNSEL

Joel Wheeler

1. The Book of Proverbs is the book of practical advice from a father to his son. King Solomon, King Lemuel and Agur are inspired authors that give insight to life.
2. The Bible contrasts wisdom and foolishness.
 - a. 'Wise' and 'wisdom' are found 120 times in Proverbs and 581 times in the entire Bible.
 - b. 'Fool,' 'fools,' 'foolish' and 'foolishness' are found 82 times in Proverbs and 193 times in the entire Bible.
3. There are those who scoff and reject wisdom.
 - a. Someone said, "Young men think that old men are fools, but old men know that young men are fools."
 - b. *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction"* (Prov. 1:7).
4. Why does one need wise counsel? How does one obtain wise counsel? What are the consequences of those that reject wise counsel? What are the rewards of receiving wise counsel?

DISCUSSION:

I. WHY DOES ONE NEED WISE COUNSEL?

- A. Man has limited knowledge and limited wisdom.
 1. *"O LORD, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* (Jer. 10:23).
 2. There is no guarantee that we will make the right decision if we trust in ourselves.
 3. *"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him"* (James 1:5)
 4. *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding"* (Prov. 3:5).
 5. God has not left man without guidance (2 Peter 1:3-4).
- B. Often the schemes of men are complicated and are in need of guidance.
 1. Nothing happens by accident, it takes planning and then working the plan.
 2. *"Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established"* (Prov. 24:3).
 3. Building a house requires knowledge and skill in construction.
 4. Jesus illustrates obedience to a man building a house (Matt. 7:24-26).

5. An engineer understands the strengths and weaknesses of building a durable structure.
 6. The same logic applies to a home, the relationship between husband and wife (Eph. 5:22-31)
 7. Personal relationships requires Biblical guidance (Matt. 7:21).
- C. One needs wise counsel to avoid sins that lead to self-destruction.
1. Solomon says going into the house of a harlot will end in destruction.
 2. He compares it to an ox being lead to the slaughter (Prov. 7:22) and a bird flying into a trap (Prov. 7:23).
 3. Gang violence will eventually end in death (Prov. 4:14-19).
 4. *"Be not deceived: Evil companionships corrupt good morals"* (1 Cor. 15:33 ASV).
 5. We reap the consequences of our actions; if not in this world, we will ultimately at the judgment (Gal. 6:7-8).

II. HOW DOES ONE OBTAIN WISE COUNSEL?

- A. We obtain counsel in the scriptures.
1. Knowledge is gained by studying the word of God (2 Tim. 2:15).
 2. *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
 3. There are many examples that are written in the word of God that will help us avoid losing our soul.
 4. *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope"* (Rom. 15:4).
 5. We can know the consequences of sin through study and the examples in the Bible.
- B. We also can obtain wise counsel through faithful Christians.
1. Elders of the church are God's shepherds which guide and advise the church (Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-4).
 2. Younger men receive instruction and wisdom from older faithful men of the congregation (Titus 2:2, 6).
 3. Older Christian ladies may have a perspective of the home that a preacher may not know, therefore their experience is invaluable (Titus 2:35).
 4. The experience and instruction of older members is invaluable for growth and maturity of the congregation (2 Tim. 2:2).

5. Older and experienced preachers are valuable assets to younger men who desire to preach the Gospel.

III. WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THOSE WHO REJECT WISE COUNSEL?

- A. Some choices are serious in nature because of the severe consequence.
 1. Rehoboam rejected wise counsel of the older men in Israel which resulted in the kingdom dividing (1 Kings 12).
 2. Ahab and Jezebel lost their life and soul because they failed to listen to God's prophet Elijah (1 Kings 16-18).
 3. *"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil"* (Prov. 3:7).
 4. *"Fools make a mock at sin: but among the righteous there is favour"* (Prov. 14:9).
- B. Rejecting wise counsel may ultimately cause one to lose their soul.
 1. Cain rejected the counsel of God (Gen. 4:4-7) which also resulted in murdering his brother (1 John 3:12).
 2. Fools are deceived by their own reasoning.
 3. *"The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way: but the folly of fools is deceit"* (Prov. 14:8).
 4. *"He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day"* (John 12:48).

IV. WHAT ARE THE REWARDS OF RECEIVING WISE COUNSEL?

- A. The avoidance of conflict and punishment.
 1. *"A reproof entereth more into a wise man than an hundred stripes into a fool"* (Prov. 17:10).
 2. How many times have we avoided punishment by simply listen and obeying the instruction of parents?
 3. *"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth"* (Eph. 6:1-3).
- B. Eternal life is for those who heed the warnings of the scriptures.
 1. Listen and obeying God will result in eternal salvation (Heb. 5:8-9).
 2. Revelation 22:17-19

CONCLUSION:

1. Those who reject wise counsel may suffer severe consequences and lose their soul.

2. Those who receive wise counsel will reap the blessings of eternal life.
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DESTRUCTIVE NATURE OF PRIDE

Victor M. Eskew

1. Here's what it looks like.
 - a. In the life of Pharaoh (Exo. 5:2)
 - b. In the life of Goliath (1 Sam. 17:43-44).
 - c. In the life of Nebuchadnezzar (Isa. 14:13-14).
 - d. In the life of a Pharisee (Luke 18:11-12).
 - e. In the life of Herod (Acts 12:21-22).
2. These examples are very bold demonstrations of our subject. Each of these individuals displayed the heinous sin of pride.
3. We are looking at pride in the book of Proverbs under the title: "The Destructive Nature of Pride."
 - a. The word "pride" is found six times in Proverbs. "Proud" is used seven times.
 - b. We read the word "haughty" three times in the book and "arrogancy" is found once.
 - c. The term "conceit" is mentioned five times.
 - d. There are other passages that also deal with pride, but they do not specifically mention any of the above terms.
 - e. If we were to choose one verse as a key verse, it would be Prov. 16:18, "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall."

DISCUSSION:

1. PRIDE DESTROYS SELF.

- A. Pride is directly involved with the individual.
 1. It is an overestimation of self.
 2. It is an elevation of self.
 3. It is an over-estimate of one's worth.
 4. It is a "conceited sense of one's superiority" (101 Most Powerful Proverbs, Rabey, Rabey, and Lang, p. 9).
 5. A man who is proud is truly a "Legend in His Own Mind."
 6. Prov. 26:12, "Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? There is more hope of a fool than of him."
- B. Let's think about man as he really is for a moment.
 1. We are the work of God (Psa. 100:3).

2. We are made from the dust of the earth (Gen. 3:19; Eccl. 12:7).
 3. We are not as smart as we think we are (Matt. 10:30).
 4. We are not as strong as we think we are (Job 38:34-35).
 5. Ultimately, every man dies (Psa. 90:10).
- C. Pride causes man to either ignore or negate the above facts.
1. The Humanist Manifesto II of 1973 states the following under a section entitled, "Religion,": "But we can discover no divine purpose for the human species. While there is much we do not know, humans are responsible for what we are or will become. No deity will save us; we must save ourselves."
 - a. There were 69 signers of this Manifesto.
 - b. There were four signers whose last names began with an "A." Three of them are now dead.
 2. Most of us are not like the signers of the Humanist Manifesto II. We do not totally reject deity. Our problems with pride are usually twofold.
 - a. We think more highly of ourselves than we ought to think (See Rom. 12:3).
 - b. We partially obey God. When God's demands for our life are not what we think they should be, we ignore God and do as we please (See 1 Sam. 15:3, 9, 17, 22-23).
- D. Those who revel in self will face destruction.
1. Three verses in Proverbs confirm this (Prov. 11:2, 16:5; 29:23).
 2. Look at the end of some of the examples that opened our lesson.
 - a. Pharaoh's kingdom was destroyed by the Ten Plagues.
 - b. Goliath was brought down by a stone from a shepherd boy's sling.
 - c. Nebuchadnezzar was driven into the field and acted as a beast for several months.
 - d. Herod fell dead and was eaten of worms.
 3. My friend, if you have a problem with pride, if you struggle with arrogance, beware. There is more hope for a fool than for you. Seek diligently to be humble.

II. PRIDE DESTROYS RELATIONSHIPS.

- A. The book of Proverbs says that contention and strife are the result of pride (Prov. 13:10; 28:25).
- B. The things we want in our relationships with others are unity, peace, and happiness. Pride destroys these things.
 1. Pride will not allow an honest discussion of the issues of disagreement between two parties.

2. Pride attacks the character of others rather than being focused upon their problems and differences.
 3. Pride seeks to divide individuals into hostile camps.
 4. Pride will not allow the words: "I am wrong."
 5. Pride will not allow the words: "I am sorry."
 6. Pride will not allow the words: "I forgive you."
- C. In the New Testament, we have two illustrations of relationships that were hurt by pride.
1. James and John requested to sit at the right hand and left hand of Jesus (Mark 10:35-41).
 - a. The Request (Mark 10:35-37)
 - b. The Response (Mark 10:41).
 - 1) The words "much displeased" mean "to be greatly afflicted" and "to be moved with indignation."
 - 2) Had Jesus not intervened in the situation, there would have been a major rift within the apostleship.
 2. Diotrephes was a man who had a pride problem (3 John 9).
 - a. There was a division between John and Diotrephes.
 - b. The problem was that Diotrephes loved to have the preeminence among them.

III. PRIDE DESTROYS ONE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

- A. There are two teachings about pride in Proverbs that tell us that it destroys our relationship with God.
1. Pride is sin (Prov. 21:4).
 2. Pride is an abomination to God (Prov. 6:16-17).
- B. Let's look at pride as sin.
1. Pride is sin because its actions transgress the Word of God (1 John 3:4).
 - a. God demands humility (Micah 6:8; Matt. 18:4; James 4:10; 1 Pet. 5:5-6).
 - b. God tells us to never think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think (Rom. 12:3).
 - c. The Bible exhorts us to have the mind of Christ, a mind of humility (Phil. 2:5-8).
 2. Two points are of great interest here.
 - a. Satan's sin was pride (1 Tim. 3:6).
 - 1) In Ezekiel 28:12-19, we have the Lord's words against the king of Tyre. Much that is said seems to come from a previous event. That event was the fall of Satan. Pride was part of that sin. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty. Thou has corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness (v. 17).

- 2) Augustine: "It was pride that changed angels into devils; it is humility that makes men as angels" (as quoted by Bobby Liddell in *The Sayings of Solomon*, B.J. Clarke, ed., p. 263).
- b. Satan led Adam and Eve into sin by appealing to their pride.
 - 1) Satan told them that they could be "as gods, knowing good and evil." And, when Eve saw that this was "a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat..." (Gen. 3:4-6).
 - 2) Satan still appeals to man's pride when he tempts man (1 John 2:15-17).
- C. Proverbs calls pride an "abomination" unto God—something He hates.
 1. What is an "abomination?"
 - a. It is something that is utterly disgusting and despised.
 - b. This writer remembers when getting dog poo on his shoe was something that was utterly disgusting. (NOTE: It still is).
 2. Why does God view pride as an abomination?
 - a. A proud man sets himself over God. This is idolatry (Exod. 20:3).
 - b. A proud man appeals to his own wisdom rather than fearing God.
 - c. A proud man thinks that he knows better than the all-wise God of heaven.
 - d. A proud man believes that he is self-sufficient and that he does not need God.
 - e. Pride is the ground in which all other sins grow.
- D. God will punish sin and His wrath will go out against all abominations. He will allow neither sin nor abominations into the eternal City (Rev. 21:27).

CONCLUSION:

1. Pride heads the list of the things God hates (Prov. 6:16-19).
 2. Pride is extremely destructive in nature: to self, to our relationships with others, and to our relationship with God.
 3. Would that all of us could grasp and practice the words of the wise man found in Prov. 16:19. "Better is it to be of a humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud."
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WHAT I WEAR SPEAKS

Ronnie Whitemore

1. Successful communication occurs when a message is understood in the way that it was intended.
 - a. Verbal communication includes the spoken and written word. We often choose our words carefully so we can communicate the intended message.
 - b. Non-verbal communication includes body language, such as eye contact and posture, and appearance. This type of communication may reinforce a person's intended message or distract from it.
2. The Bible is filled with many admonitions about our "conversation" in the KJV.
 - a. We often describe "conversation" in these contexts as the Christian's "manner of life" (2 Cor. 1:12; Gal. 1:13; Eph. 2:3; 4:22; Phil. 1:27; 3:20; 1 Tim. 4:12; Heb. 13:5, 7; James 3:13; 1 Peter 1:15,18; 2:12; 3:1-2,16; 2 Peter 2:7; 3:11).
 - b. Likewise, we often describe Jesus' statement in Matt. 10:32-33 as more than an oral confession. In the broad sense, our confession of Christ should include other aspects of our life.
3. Have you ever considered the communication we convey to others by how we dress or what we wear?
 - a. The preacher stands in the pulpit on Sunday morning with a very serious and important message. In what manner would you receive that message if he were dressed in a clown outfit?
 - b. A lawyer sits behind his desk to discuss an important legal issue with you in his office. Would it matter to you how he was dressed? What if he was wearing his fishing clothes and hat and his fishing gear was on his desk?
 - c. Do you think it would matter what a poll-bearer wears? Would pajamas be appropriate?
4. Would we not agree that **WHAT I WEAR SPEAKS?**

DISCUSSION:

- I. **BIBLE EXAMPLES TEACH THAT WHAT A PERSON WEARS SENDS A MESSAGE.**
 - A. The woman in Proverbs 7:10 is described "with the attire of an harlot, and subtle of heart."
 1. Read the entire context of Proverbs 7:1-23.
 2. She communicates certain messages to this man. She uses enticing words and promises. She kisses him.
 3. She adorns even her bed in a luxurious and provocative way.
 4. Solomon describes her victim as "an ox goeth to slaughter."

5. This great temptation began with how she was dressed.
- B. Rebekah dressed Jacob in a way to deceive Isaac.
 1. Read Genesis 27:1-29.
 2. Jacob and Esau were different types of people. Esau was a hunter. Jacob was not.
 3. In an effort to receive the blessing from Isaac, Jacob with his mother's help deceived his blind father.
 4. Jacob wore Esau's "goodly raiment." He covered his hands with goat skins. He smelled and felt like Esau.
 5. This deception was made possible by how Jacob dressed.
- C. Tamar deceived Judah with her attire.
 1. Read Genesis 38:1-30.
 2. At the death of her husband, Er, Tamar dressed in the traditional widow's garment. This garment manifested a message of mourning and unavailability.
 3. But Tamar changed her clothes, covered her face with a veil and wrapped herself in such a way that Judah thought she was a harlot and he went in to her.
 4. When Tamar was found with child, Judah, not knowing the circumstances, ordered her to be burnt until she revealed his part in the shameful act.
 5. Again, an act of deception and sin were expedited by how Tamar dressed.
- D. David refused armor and wore his shepherd's garments.
 1. Read 1 Samuel 17:17-54.
 2. David met Goliath without armor because he had not "proved" them.
 3. He met Goliath in his shepherd's garments and his sling.
 4. His dress sent a message of complete faith in God and no need for artificial help. David argued the importance of the cause over his clothing.
- E. There was a physical distinction between Rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16.
 1. Read Luke 16:19-31.
 2. The rich man is described as being "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day."
 3. Lazarus is described as a beggar "which laid at his gate, full of sores. And desiring to be bed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." Now the Bible does not tell us what Lazarus was wearing, but how do you think he was dressed?
- F. James rebuked brethren who showed "respect of persons."
 1. Read James 2:1-13.
 2. There was a man "with a gold ring, in goodly apparel."
 3. There was a poor man "in vile raiment."
 4. Their dress sent a message about their social status.

5. The brethren were rebuked because of their improper motives — they wanted favors from the rich man — though — he blasphemed Christ!
6. The brethren mistreated the poor man because they considered him beneath them and invaluable.

II. SOCIAL MANNERS TEACH THAT WHAT A PERSON WEARS SENDS A MESSAGE.

- A. Traditional fashion dictates we wear certain colors in the spring and summer and other colors in the fall and winter.
- B. Climates will also dictate the color and fashion of our clothing. Citizens who live in warmer climates on the West coast and in Florida will typically wear fashions suitable for the warmer weather.
- C. Special occasions and events will also influence our dress—such as weddings, funerals, operas, football games, Easter, Halloween, Christmas dinner and New Year's party.
- D. We dress a certain way when we are cleaning the garage, mowing the grass or cleaning the gutters.
- E. We dress in different ways for work based on occupation: blue collar and white collar jobs; scrubs and uniforms; business dress or casual dress.

III. OUR DRESS IS CONTROLLED BY OUR HEARTS.

- A. Someone may argue that it does not matter how we dress because God judges not by the outward appearance, but He judges the heart.
 1. This argument is made from 1 Samuel 16:7: "But the Lord said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him: for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."
 2. I do not read about David's dress in this passage. The text lists his countenance (face) and his stature (height).
 3. Of all the sons of Jesse, David was the youngest and least likely to be chosen—by men!
 4. But God chose David because he was a "man after mine own heart, which shall fulfill all my will" (Acts 13:22).
- B. Now I want to make a series of arguments based on scriptural principles that our dress should be reflective of what is in our hearts.
 1. Solomon wrote, "For as he [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he" (Prov. 23:7).
 2. Jesus said, "That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications,

murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness; All these evil things come from within, and defile the man” (Mark 7:20-23).

C. Jesus condemned hypocrisy.

1. The religious leaders of Jesus’ day were guilty of appearing clean, but were actually corrupt (Matt. 23:25). He rebuked them for their hypocrisy which led to their vanity (Matt. 15:8-9).
 - a. Al Capone dressed in suits and gave money to charities, but he was a thug and a gangster guilty of heinous crimes.
 - b. Osama Bin Laden gave money to the needy while he and his gang terrorized their communities and ultimately did great harm to other nations.
2. We do not hide our light under a bushel; we are to “let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

D. Our language should reflect what is in our hearts.

1. “Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man” (Col. 4:6).
2. We should not speak the language of Ashdod (Neh. 13:23-24).
3. Words of profanity indicate evil in the heart; word of praise and gratitude indicate goodness in the heart.

E. Our deeds should reflect what is in our hearts.

1. What story did the good works of Dorcas tell about her (Acts 9:36-41)?
2. What did the lies of Ananias and Sapphira tell about them (Acts 5:1-11)?

F. Our dress should reflect what is in our hearts.

1. We are guided by certain Biblical principles.
 - a. We are to dress modestly (Gen. 3:7, 21; 1 Tim.2:9-10).
 - b. We are to worship God in spirit and in truth (John 4:24).
 - c. We are to show reverence and respect unto God (Psa. 111:9).
 - d. We are to honor the Lord with our substance and first fruits (Prov. 3:9).
2. We should be concerned about what God thinks of our attire because He is our judge (John 12:48; Rev. 20:12-15).
 - a. If you wear something cut too low or too high, you are communicating a message to God and to others!

- b. If you wear something in worship that is immodest—in the sense that you draw attention to yourself—you are communicating a message to God and to others!
 - c. If you wear something dirty and inappropriate—by choice—you are communicating a message to God and others!
3. Unless you wear the same type of clothing everywhere, you make a distinction in your dress every day.
- a. You have work clothes, play clothes, business clothes, party clothes, funeral clothes, wedding clothes, etc.
 - b. Likewise you should have worship clothes and they should reflect what is in your heart!

CONCLUSION:

1. Friends, do not confuse physical appearance that one cannot help, with dress that one can control. You cannot control how tall you are. You cannot control the distance between your eyes. You cannot control the size of your ears.
 2. But we can make sure that we communicate sound and wholesome messages to God and others both verbally and non-verbally.
 3. Let us seek to demonstrate reverence and respect for God in every way possible and remember that what we wear speaks!
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HOW TO BE A GOOD NEIGHBOR

Cade K. Somers

1. Older generations idealized relationships between neighbors. Just compare your closeness with neighbors to that of your parents and grandparents. Consider old TV sitcoms that represented good neighbors who help one another.
2. Things seem different today. Many neighbors we hear about today share more infamous accounts.
 - a. In 2008 a Fairfax County, Virginia man named Stephen Carr, known by many as a good neighbor, successfully petitioned to have a speed bump installed in front of his house. Shortly thereafter, Carr was shot to death by another neighbor who detested the idea (Jackman).
 - b. A California feud between John Kenney and a neighboring couple began when the couple did not help to pay for the repairs of a shared entry bridge to their properties. What followed were verbal altercations, a physical struggle, the

man blocking the entrance to his neighbors' car port with a large rock, and finally a day in 2008 when John confronted and fatally shot both the husband and wife (Morrison).

3. A certain lawyer asked Jesus, "Who is my neighbor" (Luke 10:29)? The answer broadens the scope universally; however, Proverbs also speaks of the common notion of "neighbor" — people in close proximity to home (3:29; 27:10).
4. The best way to become a good neighbor universally is to start with those closest in proximity. My challenge to you is to start with this basic task, and grow to God's expectation to treat every person as your neighbor.
5. Passages from Proverbs in God's "How-To Book" are ready to aid us in becoming good neighbors. Since we have the proverbs, we should preach them (Prov. 9:9).

DISCUSSION:

I. BE WISE; DON'T DESPISE (Prov. 11:12; 14:21).

- A. Unwise people don't know how to treat neighbors.
 1. "Despise" (He. *būz*): "to disrespect: – contemn,...utterly" (Strong's Bible Dictionary)
 2. Notice "he that despiseth his neighbor sinneth" (14:21). Acting upon scorn is not the only sin; so is the unseen scorn in one's heart (Lev. 19:17; 1 John 3:15; James 1:15).
 3. Wisdom considers time beyond the present; thus, the unwise don't consider the implications of mistreating their neighbors today and the effect it could have tomorrow. For example, if a hurricane destroyed my house and others, would I expect the neighbor I've mistreated through the years to offer my family food or shelter (cf. Luke 16:1-8; cf. Matt. 7:12)?
- B. Covetousness (or idolatry, Col. 3:5), one of the many works of the flesh (Gal. 5:20), leads to jealousy and hatred (1 Tim. 6:6-10).
 1. It is explicitly prohibited in our relationships with neighbors (Exod. 20:17).
 2. Ahab coveted Naboth's vineyard (1 Kings 21:1-6), and brutality followed (vs.7-25).
- C. God commands to "love thy neighbor as thyself" (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 19:19).
 1. It is second "of all the commandments," and none other is "greater than these" (Mark 12:29-31; cf. Matt. 22:40; Gal. 5:14).
 2. "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18).

II. TREAT PEACEFULLY; LIVE SECURELY (Prov. 3:29).

- A. We should maintain mutual security with our neighbors.
 1. Compare "...seeing he dwelleth securely by thee" (KJV) and "...For he dwells by you for safety's sake" (NKJV)
 2. Peaceful relations means shared security (why we like neighborhood watches and watch our neighbor's houses when they're away), but when a neighbor steals (or, borrows and doesn't return), lies, acts suspiciously, feuds with family members, or verbally or physically lashes out at other neighbors, people become more cautious about locking doors and watching their backs.
- B. There are many simple, practical ways to create peace and increase security with neighbors. For example:
 1. Take them food and give them cards when they're sick or on their birthdays.
 2. Offer to check mail when they go on vacation.
 3. Offer to pick something up at the grocery store for them.
 4. Offer to wash their car.
 5. Express willingness to share one's basic goods (i.e. food ingredients, yard tools)
 6. Trim their bushes, rake leaves, or mow their lawns.
 7. Keep your home and property clean and quiet.
 8. Participate in wholesome neighborhood activities (e.g. yard sales, passing out candy to trick-or-treaters, etc.)
 9. Parents/Grandparents, stand or play outside with your children and their neighborhood friends to visibly supervise and ensure safety.

III. DISCUSS DISAGREEMENT; CULTIVATE CONFIDENTIALITY (Prov. 25:8-10).

- A. The meaning of "neighbor" (He. *rêya*) can extend to a fellow citizen, companion, associate, husband, or brother (Strong's Bible Dic.).
 1. The same beginning point of addressing fault among brethren in Christ applies well to addressing complaints ("debate[ing]", or contending) with neighbors (cf. Matt. 18:15).
 2. It is always more discreet and sincere if we discuss what can be serious matters personally.
- B. When disagreements occur, first determine the depth of the implications.
 1. "Go not forth hastily" suggests patience. Many disputes are over insignificant subjects.
 2. No discussion should be the first choice to consider. If this is not possible, go to the neighbor privately.
 3. If a resolution is supposed irreconcilable, remember Luke 14:31-32.

- C. God condemns “bear[ing] false witness,” or slander, against a neighbor (Exod. 20:16; Prov. 10:18).
 - 1. Loving life and doing good should compel one to “refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips...[from] guile” (1 Peter 3:10).
 - 2. Slander comes from thinking too long about speaking things one “ought not” (1 Tim. 5:13).
 - 3. To avoid gossip, the wise person “concealeth the matter” rather than wielding the tongue when a disagreement has been resolved (Prov. 11:13; James 3:5).
 - 4. Slander not only hurts one’s neighbor, it ruins the life and reputation of the slanderer (Prov. 25:10).

IV. SHOW THE WAY; DON’T LEAD ASTRAY (Prov. 12:26).

- A. The American Standard Version translates: “The righteous is a guide to his neighbor; But the way of the wicked causeth them to err.”
 - 1. While this lesson deals with a lot of ways we can build our temporal relations with our neighbors, this verse demonstrates the ultimate purpose of “Love thy neighbor as thyself” — We want them to be saved (2 Peter 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4).
 - 2. Christians serve as lights to their neighbors and the world (Phil. 2:15; cf. Matt. 5:13-16).
- B. Don’t use your neighbors (Jer. 22:13; 1 Thess. 4:6).
 - 1. Don’t use them for what they can do for you or what their things can do for you.
 - 2. If we’re in possession of something that is our neighbors (whether stolen or “borrowed”), Leviticus 6:2-6 teaches the importance of returning it.
 - 3. Even if an “enemy,” we should return something they’ve lost if we find it (cf. Exod. 23:4).
- C. Set the proper example in every way, materially and spiritually (1 Peter 2:11-12).
- D. Neighborly Lessons from Matthew 5:37-47
 - 1. Speak the truth all the time (v.37; Zech. 8:16-17; Prov. 12:19).
 - 2. Don’t return evil for evil, but go the extra mile (vs38-40).
 - 3. Give to him when he asks; don’t turn him away (v.41).
 - 4. Pray for them and do good to all of them (vs.42-47).

V. BE BETTER THAN A BROTHER; YOUR NEIGHBORS WILL NOTICE (Prov. 27:10).

- A. We expect our family, our brothers and sisters, to love (cf. Matt. 5:47; Luke 6:32).
- B. But, when one’s family can often disappoint, a neighbor has the opportunity to be better than a brother.

1. "A man that hath friends must shew himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).
2. The Parable of the Good Samaritan demonstrates this (Luke 10:30-37). The Samaritan, not the Levite, not the priest, recognized his neighbor and cared for him.
3. Job's attitude toward neighbors: "If I have withheld the poor from their desire, or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; ¹⁷Or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof; ¹⁸(For from my youth he was brought up with me, as with a father, and I have guided her from my mother's womb;) ¹⁹If I have seen any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering; ²⁰If his loins have not blessed me, and if he were not warmed with the fleece of my sheep; ²¹If I have lifted up my hand against the fatherless, when I saw my help in the gate: ²²Then let mine arm fall from my shoulder blade, and mine arm be broken from the bone" (Job 31:16-22).

VI. IF YOU WANT IT TO LAST; KNOW WHEN YOUR TIME IS PAST (Prov. 25:17).

- A. Spending profitable time with neighbors is good, but Solomon teaches here to be careful not to wear out our welcome.
 1. A similar saying says, "Familiarity breeds contempt."
 2. There have been times I've been out visiting others in homes or hospitals or on front lawns and realized that after a period of time it was important to dismiss myself.
- B. It is very interesting to me that Solomon includes this proverb. We must understand that keeping a comfortable closeness and permitting one another to maintain privacy is important between even the closest relationships at home, in the workplace, among our social groups, friends, and neighbors. We've all probably struggled with the kind of person, and I state this only for us to understand the point. who'd just never go away. No matter how much a person may respect or love another, too much can be too much.

CONCLUSION:

1. Let us work to become the best neighbors we can be to those around us. Meditate and act on the spiritual song, "A Beautiful Life" ("Each Day I'll Do a Golden Deed").
2. God has blessed my family with great neighbors everywhere we've lived. We've enjoyed striving to be mutual good neighbors to all of them.

3. But, no matter how much I appreciate my neighbors impact on my life, I want them to be directed to obey the gospel of Jesus Christ through my influence on theirs.
4. Start becoming a better neighbor to the person next door and continue with the multitudes of neighbors you have throughout the world.

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PROPER CONDUCT OF CHILDREN TOWARD THEIR PARENTS

John Brooks Boyd, Jr.

1. The premise of this topic is almost a mirror of the book of Proverbs.
 - a. Solomon has primarily written advice for life to his son (1:8-10).
 - b. This study views the son's (child's) responsibilities and attitudes toward his parents.
2. Solomon also had much to say about how children who are accountable should behave toward their parents and other older adults.
3. This study attempts to combine and categorize both the statements and inferred teachings of Proverbs on this topic.

DISCUSSION:

I. CHILDREN SHOULD SHOW RESPECT TO THEIR PARENTS.

- A. Solomon honored his own father at the beginning of the book.
 1. "The proverbs of Solomon the son of David, king of Israel" (1:1).
 2. This is an example of at least minimal respect, and is worthy of imitation.

- B. Solomon's appeal in parts of Proverbs suggests that all children should respect their elders and be willing to learn from them.
1. "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding" (4:1; cf., 5:7; 7:24 & 8:32).
 2. This suggests that a caring father's appeal to all children ought to be heard just on that basis.
- C. Solomon's general statement regarding the generations supports the same conclusion.
1. "The glory of young men is their strength; and the beauty of old men is the gray head" (20:29).
 2. "Beauty" here suggests "an honourable appearance" (*Keil & Delitzsch*, Vol. 6, p. 60).
 3. He qualifies the implied honor due to the aged in 16:31, saying, "The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."
- D. It is normal and right for families to delight in each other. "Children's children are the crown of old men; and the glory of children are their fathers" (17:6).
- E. There is an implied connection between respect for parents and respect for God.
1. Solomon repeatedly asked his young readers to hear instruction.
 - a. "Now therefore hearken unto me, O ye children: for blessed are they that keep my ways. Hear instruction, and be wise, and refuse it not" (8:32, 33).
 2. Receiving that instruction is connected to the fear of the Lord.

"The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility" (15:33).
 3. Therefore, a humble son who fears God will hear his father's instruction.
- F. Children should also respect the things of their parents:
1. Their parents' friends: "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not" (27:10a), and
 2. Their parents' work and possessions: "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set" (22:28).

II. CHILDREN SHOULD REALIZE THE INTENTION OF PARENTAL INSTRUCTION AND ADVICE.

- A. The term, "my son," used twenty-three times in Proverbs, indicates the attitude of the author.
1. Kittel and Friedrich say of "son." "Primarily the Israelite wants sons, for, while daughters leave the family in marriage, sons ensure its future, build new houses, and are the crown of the aged, Prv. 17:6; 23:24f" (*TDNT*, Vol. VIII, p. 342).

2. Consequently, Solomon's desire for his own happiness would be tied in part to his son's future choices.
- B. Such is the desired outcome of proper discipline ("correction ...the rod," 23:13, 14).
 1. "My son, if thine heart be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine. Yea, my reins shall rejoice, when thy lips speak right things" (23:15, 16).
- C. Right-thinking parents desire what is best for their children.
 1. Solomon spoke of the commandment of the father and the law of the mother (6:20, 21), saying, "When thou goest, it shall lead thee; when thou sleepest, it shall keep thee; and when thou awakest, it shall talk with thee" (6:22).
 2. "My son, eat thou honey, because it is good; and the honeycomb, which is sweet to thy taste: So shall the knowledge of wisdom be unto thy soul: when thou hast found it then there shall be a reward, and thy expectation shall not be cut off" (24:13, 14).
- D. Parental instruction is intended to help children avoid future problems.
 1. "My son, fear thou the LORD and the king: and meddle not with them that are given to change: For their calamity shall rise suddenly; and who knoweth the ruin of them both?" (24:21, 22).
 2. Some of those warnings are about relationships that lead to ruin.
 - a. Sinners scheming to get rich by abusing others are to be avoided (1:10-19).
 - b. The son's involvement with immoral women is warned against repeatedly, "For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life" (6:26). (See also 7:5; 23:27, 28 & 29:3.)
 - 1) Such warnings comprise the main thought of 6:23-7:27 and 9:13-18.
 - 2) "Winebibbers and riotous eaters of flesh" (23:20) are not to be chosen as companions, "For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" (23:21).
 - c. Any counselor that encourages bad choices is to be avoided.

"Cease, my son, to hear the instruction that causeth to err from the words of knowledge" (19:27).
- E. Children who heed their parents' advice will do better in life.

1. So declared Solomon in 22:17-21.
 2. Doing so in this case leads the child to "trust in the Lord" (22:19).
- F. Children need to realize their parents are leaving them a legacy.
1. "A good man leaveth an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just" (13:22). "The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him" (20:7).
 2. However, children should not count on that inheritance, but make their own way.
 - a. "Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation?" (27:23, 24).
 - b. Especially in the case of the following: "The simple inherit folly: but the prudent are crowned with knowledge" (14:18).

III. CHILDREN MUST RESIST ANY URGE TO DISHONOR, DISPARAGE OR MISTREAT THEIR PARENTS.

- A. The writer of Proverbs considers speaking ill of one's parents is a costly mistake.
1. "Whoso curseth his father or his mother, his lamp shall be put out in obscure darkness" (20:20).
 2. Solomon speaks of a generation who verbally disrespects their parents (30:11), and then states, "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it" (30:17).
 3. In fact, despising a father's instruction classifies one as a "scorner" (13:1) and a "fool" (15:5).
- B. It is a violation of God's will to mistreat or neglect one's parents.
1. "He that wasteth his father, and chaseth away his mother, is a son that causeth shame, and bringeth reproach" (19:26).
 2. "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer" (28:24).
 3. This is especially true of one's widowed mother.
 - a. That generation that is characterized by cursing their fathers, also "doth not bless their mother" (30:11).
 - b. Such is implied in 19:26, because a father would not permit a son to chase his mother if he were still alive.
- C. However, some parents must admit that they have authored problems with their children.

1. “The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame” (29:15).
2. That child is still accountable for his conduct.
 - a. “Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a companion of riotous men shameth his father” (28:7).
 - b. The “law” in this case is understood to be God’s law.

CONCLUSION:

1. Solomon gave great advice for life: “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths” (3:5, 6).
 2. Accountable children will have a God-blessed life when they apply this principle to all their relationships, especially those involving their parents. “In the fear of the LORD is strong confidence: and his children shall have a place of refuge” (14:26).
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FATHERHOOD

(Instructions from a Father to His Son)

Michael Gilbert

1. I can’t tell you the “how” of rearing children – but I can tell you the “what”.
 - a. As to the “how” of rearing children, different things work for different children.
 - b. But, as to the “what”, those principles haven’t changed. *Each generation must be guided by the sacred truths found within God’s Word.*
 - c. If parents, especially fathers, will train their sons (and daughters as well) to be wise, then those sons will lead their wives and families in godliness.
 - d. Foolish fathers *generally* raise foolish sons who bring shame and reproach on God and their parents, while wise fathers *generally* raise wise sons who respect and honor God and their Father and Mother (Ezekiel 18, as well as life itself, shows that there are exceptions to this rule).
 - e. *Fathers, do you want children that honor you? Rear them wisely according to the principles of morality in the Bible. Mothers, do you want children that honor and respect you? Under the direction of God’s Word, and under the leadership of your husband, rear them wisely.*

2. In this sermon, we are going to focus on what Fathers must do to rear their sons up to know God and be good people in the communities in which they live; and ultimately, to enter the precious home of the soul – Heaven. To do that, we are going to focus on the leadership of the father in the family, and his relationship with his son from Prov. 1-10.
3. Unfortunately, the role of the father has, for a long time, been systematically attacked and destroyed in our culture.
 - a. We've seen a dramatic increase of stay-at-home dads, absent dads, moms who "don't need" or "don't want" dad around, etc. And, if one thing is clear in Scripture it is this, the actions of one generation can effect future generations.
 - b. We, as the church of Christ (the Lord's church), *should be following God's plan*. Whatever may be happening in society around us, we should be ensuring that a righteous generation of godly men will be raised up to lead the Lord's church in the future. Fathers, in particular, have this responsibility.
4. Fortunately, God has taught us all we need to know about rearing the next generation of godly men. God the Holy Spirit gave us a manual for fathers to use on their sons – it's called the book of Proverbs. My family has been blessed to be looking into Proverbs lately. We read a chapter a day as we eat a meal together. This simple act has blessed our lives immensely.
 - a. Proverbs is really **the** lesson book on life from which fathers can teach their sons.
 - b. Prov. 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1; 4:10; 4:20; 5:1; 6:1; 6:20; 7:1
 - c. These first ten chapters seem to be designed for a father to use in teaching his son about how to live life to the glory of God. As fathers go, so go nations, so go generations, so goes history. God took the basic principles of the Wisdom that comes from above (James 3:17) and preserved it down through the centuries in the book we call Proverbs.
5. Frankly, if we fathers are to raise a generation of godly men who will lead the next generation through their trials, we must teach the truths that are mandated in this divine father's manual.
 - a. There's a lot of instruction available today for fathers to teach their sons, much of it even in a Christian context, that is trivial. The book of Proverbs is not trivial.
 - b. The primary duty of a father, according to Proverbs, is to teach holy living to his sons (and his daughters as well), who can then lead their wives and children in holiness and right living.
6. God's providence is amazing. I was doing some soul-searching and digging in the Scriptures for things I needed to be teaching my 6 year-old son, when brother Sidney called me and asked if I would speak on this lectureship. At that time I was interested in learning more about what the Proverbs said about father-

hood. He graciously offered to let me address this subject. As I began to consider the book of Proverbs, I was encouraged as I saw the beauty and responsibility of fatherhood brought home to me in a very practical way in the book, especially the first ten chapters. God has not left me, as a father, without instructions on how to raise my son! The following is what I have learned so far from the Proverbs.

7. To be an effective father to my son, I must teach him.

DISCUSSION:

I. "SON, FEAR GOD" (1:7; 9:10; 10:27).

- A. Fathers, you must model your faith in God for your son. He will then, in time, learn to (1) fear your God, then, as God becomes his God, he will learn to (2) fear his God.
- B. What does it mean to "fear God"?
 1. A proper fear of God begins with teaching my son about my God.
 2. A proper fear of God must surely include teaching my son a healthy fear of God's displeasure with the sins he will commit.
 3. A proper fear of God is not properly expressed without worshipping Him.

II. "SON, GUARD YOUR MIND" (3:3; 4:23).

- A. You are responsible as a father for the mind of your child (Eph. 6:4).
- B. When the assault on the human mind is at such a level as it is today, the job of guarding the mind of your son and teaching him how to guard his own mind, is essential.
 1. Guard against certain ideas in the public education system in America (evolution, atheistic humanism, worldliness, etc.)
 2. Guard against the various forms of media: music, books, internet, reading material, tv, movies, etc.
- C. Prov. 4:23 and also 2:10-13, 3:1-4, 4:1-7, 7:1-3

III. "SON, OBEY YOUR PARENTS" (1:8; 2:1; 3:1).

- A. All through this entire section, these statements about "hear, my son, your father's instruction," are repeated.
 1. 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1,10,11,20
 2. He cannot learn to obey without discipline (3:11-12; see also 10:13; 19:18)
- B. Whom the Father loves, He disciplines. And as an earthly father, I must also discipline my son. This discipline is done for the purpose of:
 1. Conforming him to the wisdom of God.

2. Breaking his self-will and teaching him to submit to his parents and to God.
 3. Removing foolishness from his heart.
 4. Delivering him from spiritual death and physical punishment.
 5. Making him a delight to me and his mother.
- C. God says physical punishment (done in love) is a strong corrective measure (22:6; 13:24; 23:13-14).
- D. Notice I keep saying, "Fathers must teach", not "the church must teach." Fathers, and no one else, are charged with passing God's truth to the next generation of men.

IV. "SON, SELECT YOUR COMPANIONS" (1:10; 12:26, NKJV)

- A. Fathers, get on the offensive! A father has the responsibility to teach his children how to choose their friends.
- B. Young men rarely rise above their friends. Proverbs teaches this very early in this instruction book for Fathers (1:10-15).
- C. 2:11, the father has to teach his son how to be delivered from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things. You don't want to be around those kinds of people.
- D. The great thing about being a Father is that we can teach our sons to choose companions who will lift them up!
- E. Prov. 12:26 (NKJV), "The righteous should choose his friends carefully, for the way of the wicked leads them astray."

V. "SON, CONTROL YOUR BODY" (Sexual Purity; 2:1, 10-11, 16-22).

- A. 2:1,10-11,16-22; 5:1-5; 6:20-26; 7:1-5,24-27; 9:13-18
- B. Teach your son these verses! Teach him sexual purity. Teach your son to control his body.
- C. Prov. 9:13-18, son, a woman of folly wants to lead you to the grave.
 1. Keep mentally away, avoid certain places in town, don't get caught in certain comprising situations, keep your hands to yourself, stay away from girls and women who have no moral compass.
 2. Guard your feet. Guard your eyes. Guard your ears. Teach your son that. Teach him to control his body for purity and he'll be a delight to you and he'll thank you for that as he grows older.
- C. Teach your son sexual self-control so he doesn't destroy his life, his family, and his future.

VI. "SON, ENJOY YOUR WIFE" (Prov. 5:15-19).

- A. There's a flip side of that. You say, "Well, if I teach him to stay away from pre-marital sex too strongly, then when he

gets married he might be shy about sex and won't appreciate the joys of marital sex." Yes, that is possible, and it has happened to men and to women. That's why you have to balance it. So, "Son, enjoy your wife."

- B. That which God forbids prior to marriage is exalted afterwards (Prov. 5:15-19).
- C. There's an old idea that Christians don't talk about sex, even to our children.
 - 1. But, have you ever noticed that idea did not originate in Scripture?
 - 2. We're discreet and age appropriate, but our Heavenly Father gave us a whole book of the Bible on love, marriage and sex (Song of Solomon), and much practical advice about sex here in the book of Proverbs. He hasn't been silent on the subject of sex, and neither should we. Satan surely teaches them, and so we have no choice but to educate them before Satan does.
 - 3. The New Testament also instructs married couples concerning the priority of their physical, sexual relationship (1 Cor. 7:1-5).
 - 4. Teach him the beauty, the wonder, and the blessedness of the gift of a wife and to enjoy her sexually. And, you will teach him best if you enjoy yours.

VII. "SON, WATCH YOUR WORDS" (4:24; 10:18-21).

- A. Teach your son to be careful how he speaks.
- B. Proverbs, in essence, says, "The lips of the righteous speak wisely."
- C. The types of language a Christian ought to avoid are numerous, and include:
 - 1. Cursing, gossip (talebearing), frivolous oaths (James 5:12).
 - 2. Slang, by-words, substitute words, dirty jokes, etc. (Eph. 5:1-6).
- D. Prov. 10:18-21; 10:11,14, etc.

VIII. "SON, PURSUE YOUR WORK" (Prov. 6:6-11).

- A. The Proverbs writer teaches his son to notice the ants (Prov. 6:6-11).
 - 1. Lesson #1 – work without a boss around (they have no overseer / ruler).
 - 2. Lesson #2 – plan ahead in your work (the ants plan for winter).
- B. "Son, you're going to make yourself poor and hungry if you don't learn how to work."

- C. On the other hand, the man who pursues his work earns a good living, has plenty of food, is rewarded for his effort and earns respect even before kings. (22:29)
- D. Prov. 10:4 – Teach your son to work and to plan ahead in his work.

IX. "SON, MANAGE YOUR MONEY" (3:9-10; 6:1-5).

- A. Common sense says that if our sons listen to us about working, then they will have to know how to manage money. "Son, manage your money. Don't let it manage you."
- B. Lesson #1 – honor the Lord with your money (Prov. 3:9-10).
 - 1. I heard of a man who is quite wealthy who gives \$5/week to the Lord.
 - 2. That's not only a shame, that's something he'll have to give an account for.
- C. On the flip side, Lesson #2 – don't be surety for another (Prov. 6:1-5).
 - 1. Why would anybody in their right mind co-sign with a stranger?
 - 2. You have yielded up the stewardship of your own money to a person for whom you cannot be accountable. So you have literally released your God-given stewardship. Teach your son not to do that. Teach your son that God has given him his resources for him to use wisely as a steward of God, not to become liable for another person whose behavior he cannot control.

X. "SON, LOVE YOUR NEIGHBORS" (3:27-30).

- A. "Son, you ought to manage your money, but you should never be greedy with it."
- B. 3:27, "Do not withhold good from those to whom it is due when it is in your power to do it." If you've got the money, give it.
- C. Lesson #1 – Generosity to the poor, meeting the needs of people around you when you have the resources is a part of honoring God.
 - 1. Don't say "Go, come back and tomorrow I'll give it" (v.28)
- D. Lesson #2 on how to love your neighbor – Don't plan to do him wrong (3:29).
 - 1. He feels well, being beside you. Don't do anything that is going to harm your neighbor.
 - 2. Don't contend with your neighbor (v.30) without any reason if he's done you no harm.
- E. Verse 35 says, you'll inherit honor if you treat your neighbor right.

CONCLUSION:

1. We have a great responsibility to this generation and the next as fathers!
 2. Remember how it all began, with fearing the Lord (1:7)? Do you fear the Lord? Are you teaching your son to fear the Lord?
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GOD'S VIEW OF TALE BEARING AND SLANDER

Dave Leonard

1. The tongue can be used for great things:
 - a. Teaching our children God's word (Deut. 6:6-7; 11:18-25; Eph. 6:4).
 - b. Glorifying and praising the name of the Lord (1 Chron. 16:23-36; Psa. 100:1-5; Heb. 13:15).
 - c. Speaking wisdom and judgment (Psa. 37:30-31).
 - d. Teaching what He has done/can do for the soul (Psa. 66:16).
 - e. Comforting and edifying one another (1 Thess. 5:11).
 - f. Good words have great value and can produce much good in the lives of men (Prov. 25:11-12; Col. 4:6).
2. It can also be used for great wickedness.
 - a. The Bible is replete with precept and principle against the wrong use of the tongue; such as: lying, deceit, false witness, blasphemy, maligning, backbiting, whispering, sowing discord, tale bearing, and slander.
 - b. We are concerned with tale bearing and slander.
3. Tale bearing and slander begin in the ditches of gossip, flowing ever stronger, more voluminous as they bear down on the intended victim.
 - a. Ethical reporters investigate information and verify evidence before making a public statement.
 - b. Not so the gossip, passing along whatever comes their way, not as concerned about truth as about knowing and being the one to pass the information along. The dictionary defines gossip as "rumor, report, tattle, or behind-the-scenes information, especially of an intimate or personal nature."
 - c. Tale bearers and slanderers are simply gossipers turned ugly; the great difference is intent.
 1. Tale bearers and slanderers actively seek to tear down.

2. It begins with frustration or anger, a reaction to a betrayal, a slight, a wound; one fights back, determined to brand the offender publicly.
4. Let us consider the terrible temptation and problem we face with these offences.

DISCUSSION:

I. WORDS.

A. Words are used for Communication.

1. We are limited to words in our communication to one another.
2. The only way to know the thoughts, the heart of a man, is for it to be revealed in words (1 Cor. 2:11).
3. The only way for us to know the mind of God is for it to be revealed in words (1 Cor. 2:6-16).
4. Even when the Lord used visions, dreams, a burning bush, a donkey... He always used words to deliver His will/message to men.
5. Without words there is no communication; therefore, we see the great power inherent in words.

B. Words are used for Expression.

1. Words are the expression of the heart (Matt. 12:34; Luke 6:45).
2. What comes from the mouth is the expression of the heart. When this is evil, it defiles the man (Matt. 15:8-20).
3. It is often said, "The eyes are the windows of the soul," but, the Scriptures inform us that our words are the windows to our hearts.
4. Judgment will be rendered upon the words we speak (Matt. 12:36-37).

II. WARNINGS.

A. Danger: We are repeatedly warned of the dangers of tale bearing and slandering (cf. Lev. 19:16; Psa. 15:1-3; 101:5; Jer. 6:28; 9:4; 1 Tim. 3:11; 2 Tim. 3:3; 1 Pet. 2:1; Eph. 5:3-4).

1. Prov. 10:18 — *"He that hideth hatred with lying lips, and he that uttereth a slander, is a fool."*
2. Prov. 11:13 — *"A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."*
3. Prov. 20:19 — *"He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips."*

B. Destruction: The words of the talebearer and slanderer are spoken for the destruction of the victim.

1. Prov. 18:8; 26:22 — *“The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.”*
2. Prov. 26:20 — *“Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth.”*

C. Death:

1. Prov. 18:4-7 — *“...A fool’s mouth is his destruction, and his lips are the snare of his soul.”*
2. Prov. 18:21 — *“Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.”*

III. WOUNDS.

A. Reputation: There are several reputations at stake when one is involved in talebearing and slander.

1. There is damage to the reputation of the victim, the teller, the hearer, the church, and of God.
2. God has called His people to be different (1 Cor. 6:9-11; 2 Tim. 2:21). God has called us to be a light in the darkness (Matt. 5:14-16).

B. Character Assassination: The victim of talebearing and slander is not given a choice or a voice in the matter, much like the victim of murder! There are several questions we can ask before speaking.

1. Is it kind? Mean-spirited? Ill-willed? Is it intended to injure or aid?
2. Is it true? If not, a whole other sin is involved!
3. Is it necessary?
 - a. Is it being told just for the sake of telling, or is the telling of it going to be beneficial to the person?
 - b. The phrases, “Inquiring minds want to know,” or “The people have a right to know” come to mind. Inquiring minds need to channel their efforts to better, godly concerns. The people do not have a right to know personal matters that pertain to gossip, talebearing, or slander.

C. Consideration: Have you thought about the numerous things of which the sinless Christ was accused by people who must have appeared to be credible sources at the time?

1. Consider once again: He was labeled a drunkard, traitor, blasphemer, heretic, demon-possessed, Sabbath-breaker, ignorant, friend of publicans and sinners, and more.
2. Not one of these accusations about Jesus was true! We see that even the sinless Lord could be accused of things more horrible and numerous than one can imagine.
3. Do we understand that people who are completely innocent of false charges are still victims of those charges nevertheless?

4. Words of talebearing and slander ALWAYS injure.

IV. WISDOM

- A. Avoid: We must stay away from the telling and the hearing (Prov. 20:19; 26:20; 1 Pet. 4:11,15).
 - B. Love: We must love the Lord, others, and our own souls (Lev. 19:16-18; Eph. 4:29-32).
 - C. Pray: We must pray for others rather than maliciously attacking them (Matt. 5:44; Luke 6:28).
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RIGHTEOUS LIFE BLESSED BY GOD

Charles Blair

All humanity depends on God for their existence (Acts 17:28). God has chosen the means of the written word to communicate to us as to Who He is and the demands which He makes on our lives (2 Tim. 3:16).

1. The Bible is where we go to find the answers to life.
 - a. There are many "self-help" books which attempt to deal with what man needs to do in order to find happiness.
 - b. The Bible remains as the only source to which we must go (Jer. 10:23).
2. Any person who strives to live on a moral plane will be happier than those who choose immoral conduct.
 - a. The moral code imprinted on man from the beginning is one of the proofs that God exists (Gen. 1:26).
 - b. Having said this, the Bible is designed to bless those who read it and obey it.
 - c. Such topics as peace, love, joy or hope may encourage anyone who reads the Bible.
 - d. The fruit of the Word of God is that which touches lives who are in submission to Jesus the Christ.
3. The book of proverbs contains good and great information. Those who are lifted up by it are those who submit their lives to Jesus the Christ.
 - a. Jesus came that we might have life and have it more abundantly (John 10:10)

DISCUSSION:

1. **THE WORD "RIGHTEOUS" HAS BEEN USED BY GOD IN ALL PERIODS OF HUMAN HISTORY TO DESCRIBE THOSE WHO ARE RIGHT WITH GOD:**

- A. Noah was called a “preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5).
- B. Lot was likewise called a “man of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:8).
- C. Righteousness speaks about the way people live their lives who have surrendered themselves to the will of God.

II. THERE ARE TWO VIEWS FOR US TO CONSIDER ABOUT RIGHTEOUSNESS.

- A. If by righteousness we mean that which we create from within ourselves, then the answers to life lies within man.
 - 1. Paul spoke of some Jews who being ignorant of God’s righteousness went about to establish their own righteousness (Rom. 10:3).
 - 2. Jesus warned against those who trusted their own righteousness to the point they despised others (Luke 18:9).
 - 3. If we look at ourselves and our own moral attainment, we need instead to view such righteousness from God’s view.
 - a. God looking at men who were engaged in sinning, that their righteousness was a “pile of filthy rags” (Isa. 64:6).
 - b. In this same verse the idea is spoken off as our “iniquities.”
 - c. The unrighteous man is a “pile of filthy rags” because his life can never rise higher than some moral achievement.
- B. On the other hand, if righteousness is from an outside source, that is God, then the view changes.
 - 1. If one is justified before God, it means they are now right with God (Rom. 5:1; 1 Cor. 6:11).
 - 2. No claim of sinless perfection but rather the understanding that God now accepts us upon our obedience to His Son, coupled with living a life devoted to the Son (Acts 10:34,35; Gal. 2:20).
 - 3. Men such as Noah and Lot were accepted by God because of the lives they were living.
 - a. Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8).
 - b. We might question the judgment of Lot in moving toward and finally being in Sodom.
 - c. However, the scripture calls him righteous because he did not engage in the same immoral conduct of his neighbors. (2 Peter 2:8)

III. WHEN WE COME TO THE BOOK OF PROVERBS, WE ARE GIVEN INSIGHT INTO RIGHTEOUS LIVING. THE BLESSINGS ARE EITHER STATED OR IMPLIED:

- A. The righteous man in every period of time is seen as one being delivered.
1. What if one by any means accumulated great wealth and then lost his soul?
 2. Jesus points to a person giving thought to this very idea.
 3. What would you give in exchange for your soul? (Matt. 16:26).
 4. Proverbs states that the treasures of the wicked profit nothing, while righteousness delivers from death (Prov. 10:2).
 - a. How many of us in our lives have seen individuals who have wasted or are wasting their lives in pursuit of treasures which fade?
 - b. The righteous man understands where his life will finally lead, that is, eternity with God (Rom. 6:23).
- B. Another view is what good is wealth in the day of wrath (Prov. 11:4)?
1. The writer here speaks about righteousness delivering from death.
 2. Two examples from the New Testament, that is Stephen and James, show that being delivered from physical harm or death is not what is under consideration (Acts 7; Acts 12:1,2).
- C. The righteous man is able to direct the course of his life.
1. When the gospel of Christ first began, the call was for men to save themselves from this untoward generation (Acts 2:40).
 2. "Untoward" means crooked, that is no sense of direction but simply winding about.
 3. Righteousness provides direction so that we do not spend our lives going from one situation to another (Prov. 11:5).
 - a. According to this verse, the wicked man falls by his own wickedness.
 - b. The righteous man, on the other hand, understands what his life is about and therefore does not lose sight of his purpose in life (Eph. 3:21).
- D. What lifts up a nation, military, economics, moral living? The Bible makes clear that it is righteousness which exalts a nation (Prov. 14:34).
1. It is not therefore the strength of a nation based on what it is able to do with its military or its money.
 2. The strength resides in the hearts of those who live for God.
 3. In Noah's day, there were not enough righteous people to stay the wrath of God.
 4. In the days of Lot, not even ten could be found who would be called righteous.

IV. PROVERBS SHOWS THE WISDOM OF GOD GIVEN TO MAN “TO LIVE BY” — MEANING THAT THE WHOLE OF ONE’S LIFE IS GIVEN TO THE PURSUIT OF LIVING FOR GOD:

- A. It is striving toward maturity by developing in our hearts a love for God which is loving Him with all our heart, soul and mind (Matt. 22:37).
- B. Loving God requires the totality of our being involved in doing all we can to please Him each day that we live (1 John 3:22; 5:3).

CONCLUSION:

1. The wisdom of this world only leads to strife and contention (James 3:14).
 2. The wisdom of God as revealed in scripture leads to a life of peace and happiness.
 3. Which road do we choose to take? One leads to eternity with God and the other leads an eternity without Him.
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THE VALUE OF REPROOF

Proverbs 3:11-12

Tommy J. Hicks

1. Hebrews 12:6-7 reminds us of the wise man’s exhortation: “My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the Lord loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth” (Prov. 3:11-12).
2. In addition to the direct statements relative to God, the Father, and His children, an obvious analogy to the same can be drawn from Solomon’s instructions to his son throughout the Book of Proverbs.
3. The Book of Proverbs proclaims the value of reproof.
 - a. “[H]e that regardeth reproof shall be honoured” (Prov. 13:18).
 - b. “[H]e that heareth reproof getteth understanding” (Prov. 15:32).
 - c. “The rod and reproof give wisdom” (Prov. 29:15).
4. In Proverbs, our English word “reproof” is translated from the Hebrew words *towkechah* and *towkachath*, which have the same basic meaning.
 - a. Strong defines these words as: “*chastisement*; figuratively (by words) *correction, refutation, proof* (even in defence); — argument, X chastened, correction, reasoning, rebuke, reproof, X

- be (often) reproof" (*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, "Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary," p.123).
- b. Gesenius says they mean: "rebuke ... argument, impeachment ... reproof, chiding ... reproofs for discipline" (*The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, p.407).
 - c. Since the defining terms used to explain what "reproof" is inseparably tie it to *discipline*, that aspect of it will be the object of this study.

DISCUSSION:

I. DISCIPLINE IS OF TWO KINDS — INSTRUCTIVE (getting right) AND CORRECTIVE (staying right) — AND BOTH HAVE VALUE (Prov. 4:13; Prov. 1:23).

- A. Inspiration teaches that instructive discipline is of value to life in the here and now, and in eternity.
 1. A person can receive "common sense" instruction for living in this world by observing the results of the conduct of others (Prov. 24:30-34).
 2. About a child brought up in the "discipline and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4, ESV), we are told, "when he is old, he will not depart from it" (Prov. 22:6).
 3. Without instruction in spiritual matters, no sinner can be saved (John 6:44-45; Mat. 28:19-20; 2 Thess. 1:6-9; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- B. Reproof, in the form of corrective discipline, is of value because the "reproofs of instruction are the way of life" (Prov. 6:23).
 1. Solomon's statement to his son in that verse is applicable to God and His children — only the "reproofs of instruction" would be based on the fact that God's "commandment is a lamp; and [His] law is light" (cf. Prov. 6:23 and Psa. 119:105).
 2. Years before David's time, Moses had written "that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live" (Deut. 8:3).
 3. Likewise, Jesus declared: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4; cf. 7:21-27).
 4. This is so because: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul" (Psa. 19:1) — conversion itself is a valuable result of corrective discipline.
 5. Now, "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2), and "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:8-9).

6. Revelation 22:14 proclaims: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”
7. Is it any wonder that Solomon heralded: “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Eccl. 12:13-14)?

II. CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE (REPROOF) WILL EITHER BE REJECTED OR IT WILL BE RECEIVED (Prov. 10:17; 13:18).

- A. The Scriptures are *not* complimentary of those who reject God’s reproof.
 1. To reject God’s reproof is to have a fatal attitude problem (Prov. 5:12-13).
 - a. They hate instruction.
 - b. They despise reproof.
 - c. They will not obey.
 - d. They will not listen.
 2. Proverbs 12:1 says “he that hateth reproof is brutish.”
 3. These are akin to those who refused to be reprovved in Jeremiah’s day to whom the Lord said: “Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein” (Jer. 6:16).
 4. Describing the same ilk in His day, Jesus said: “For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matt. 13:15).
 5. Needless to say, there is no hope of salvation for those who go astray and then refuse to be corrected (Prov. 1:24-32; Heb. 10:26-31).
- B. The Scriptures are complimentary toward those who receive God’s reproof.
 1. They are deemed to be “among the wise” — “The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise” (Prov. 15:31).
 2. Those receiving reproof are promised: “Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you ... whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil” (Prov. 1:23,33).

III. NOW, AS OF OLD, GOD'S REPROOF (CORRECTIVE DISCIPLINE) OF HIS CHILDREN SERVES THREE IMPORTANT PURPOSES.

- A. God's reproof has as its primary purpose to save the soul of the individual being corrected (James 5:19-20).
1. The reason for disciplining the incestuous brother at Corinth was that his "spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:1-5).
 2. At the reproof he received from Peter, Simon responded: "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me" (Acts 8:24).
 3. Reproof profits the one being corrected because "it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby" (Heb. 12:10-11).
- B. When God's reproof (discipline) is exercised in the case of wrongdoers in the church, it serves to benefit the church and her members by keeping it on the straight and narrow.
1. As a result of God's discipline being carried out in the case of Ananias and Sapphira, "great fear came upon all the church" (Acts 5:11).
 - a. Deuteronomy 19:19-20 makes the point that those who see reproof (discipline) demonstrated are not inclined so err themselves.
 - b. A friend used to say: "If our children start misbehaving, if you will spank yours, mine will straighten out."
 2. When elders in the Lord's church are in need of reproof, Paul commanded: "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (1 Tim. 5:20).
 3. Realizing that some might refuse to accept his instructions and reproofs regarding those walking disorderly, Paul ordered: "[I]f any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thess. 3:14).
- C. Unbelievers (those not God's children) can be positively influenced when they see or know of God's reproof of His children.
1. Not only did "great fear" come "upon all of the church" as a result of God's disciplining of Ananias and Sapphira, it came "upon as many as heard these things" (Acts 5:11).
 2. Contrary to it stymying the church's growth, "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women" (Acts 5:1-14).
 3. When those in the world see those in the church being Scripturally reproofed for wrongdoing, it shows them what the church stands for — and what it will not stand for.

- D. In addition to individuals, at times entire congregations stand in need of reproof.
1. New Testament letters addressed specifically to New Testament churches show this (cf. 1 Cor., Gal., etc.).
 2. Churches in Ephesus, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Laodicea — five (5) out of the seven (7) churches of Asia — received reproof from the Lord (Rev. 2:1-3:22).
 3. The church in Ephesus was in so much trouble that it was told: “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent” (Rev. 2:5).

CONCLUSION:

1. The value of reproof to the individual and to the church is not realized when it is neglected.
2. Needed reproof is too often neglected because it can be unpleasant — “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous” (Heb. 12:11).
 - a. Disciplining children is hard for parents to do, but they are told:
 - 1) “He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes” (Prov. 13:24).
 - 2) “Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him” (Prov. 22:15).
 - 3) “Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell” (Prov. 23:13-14).
 - b. Those unwilling to receive Scriptural reproof can be uncharitable.
 - 1) There are those who hate instruction and despise reproof (Prov. 5:12).
 - 2) “A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him” (Prov. 15:12; cf. 9:8).
 - 3) “Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die” (Prov. 15:10).
2. Regardless of how it is viewed by men, because of the eternal value it can have and the great good that can be accomplished by it, faithful Christians are obligated to engage in reproof whenever, wherever and with whoever it is needed.
 - a. Speaking of God’s Word, Paul stressed: “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for *reproof*, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16-17, emphasis added).

- b. Paul charged: "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; *reprove*, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:2, emphasis added).
 - c. When it comes to dealing with doctrinal error, every Christian is told: "And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather *reprove* them" (Eph. 5:11, emphasis added).
4. Every child of God is told: "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth...that we might be partakers of his holiness" (Heb. 12:5-6, 10).
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CHOOSING FRIENDS CAREFULLY

Barry O'Dell

1. "A friend is one who knows you and loves you just the same."
 - a. "I value the friend who for me finds time on his calendar, but I cherish the friend who for me does not consult his calendar."
 - b. "Lots of people want to ride with you in the limo, but what you want is someone who will take the bus with you when the limo breaks down."
 - c. The apostle Paul wrote, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good morals" (1 Cor. 15:33).
2. There are extremely important decisions to be made in life:
 - a. When one obeys the gospel.
 - b. When one chooses a mate.
 - c. When one chooses a friend.
3. Proverbs is a collection of short, wise sayings that, at times, seems disjointed.
 - a. However, the book is all brought together under one statement, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Prov. 1:7).
4. Our goal in this lecture is to examine what the book of Proverbs says, negatively and positively, about choosing friends.

DISCUSSION:

1. PROVERBS AND NEGATIVE FRIENDS.

- A. There are several verses in Proverbs that deal with a friendship that has been based on money.

1. "The poor is hated even of his own neighbor: but the rich hath many friends" (Prov. 14:20).
 2. "Wealth maketh many friends; but the poor is separated from his neighbor... Many will entreat the favor of the prince: and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts. All the brethren of the poor do hate him: how much more do his friends go far from him" (Prov. 19:4, 6-7).
- B. Why are the above statements true? Because people like people who give them things!
1. These statements reveal a person who will seek a relationship out of selfish motives or covetousness.
 2. What does the Bible say about selfishness?
 - a. "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 2:4-5)
 - b. The "mind" of Christ is revealed in Luke 6:27-32.
 3. In terms of covetousness, "Take heed; and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:15).
 - a. Covetousness says, "If you cannot do anything for me or give me anything, I do not need your friendship."
 - b. Paul informs us that covetousness is a form of idolatry (Col. 3:5).
 4. J. B. Coffman made several excellent points on wealth in his commentary on Luke 16:9:
 - a. Wealth deceives the owner into believing it is his.
 - b. It strongly tempts him to trust in his riches.
 - c. In making a man depend on them for happiness, riches rob him of salvation and the glory of God.
 - d. It estranges him from earthly friends.
 - e. It surrounds him with false friends.
 - f. Wealth promises much and delivers nothing.
 - g. It is a constant hazard to his spirituality.
- C. Another verse in Proverbs gives us warning about making a certain type of friend: "Make no friendship with an angry man; and with a furious man thou shalt not go: Lest thou learn his ways, and get a snare to thy soul" (Prov. 22:24-25).
1. Anger is not always condemned in the Bible.
 - a. Paul wrote, "Be ye angry, and do not sin: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: Neither give place to the devil" (Eph. 4:26-27).
 - b. Jesus Christ illustrated the fact that there is a time to get angry, but sin does not have to be committed.
 - c. John 2:13-17; Matt. 21:12-13
 2. Christians are commanded to be "slow to wrath" (James 1:19).

- a. The two words used by Solomon in Proverbs 22:24-25 are very interesting:
 - 1) *Angry* is from a Hebrew word that means "nose or nostril." Have you ever seen a man who is so angry that his nose is flaring?
 - 2) *Furious* is from a Hebrew word that means "heat, rage." Have you ever seen anyone get "hot under the collar?"
- b. The reason we do not want to associate with this type of person is that we might "learn his ways."
 - 1) Anger, wrath, outbursts of rage NEVER lead to anything good!
 - 2) James 1:20, "For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."
 - 3) Solomon wrote, "He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly" (Prov. 14:17).
 - 4) Anger is often an immediate and overly emotional reaction to something that has been said or done.
 - 5) The angry person does not take time to think through what he is about to say or do.
 - 6) Our God is slow to anger and we should be learning His ways rather than the ways of an angry man.

II. PROVERBS AND POSITIVE FRIENDS.

- A. Inspiration tells us, not only what NOT to do, but also, what TO do in terms of making friends.
- B. "A friend loveth at all times, and a brother is born for adversity" (Prov. 17:17).
 1. The person we talk to before anyone else about a setback or success may not be blood related.
 2. A true friend will stick with us during the good and the bad, whether we are rich or poor!
 3. David and Jonathan illustrate this fact very well.
 - a. "Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and was departed from Saul" (1 Sam. 18:12).
 - b. On two occasions Saul attempted to murder David because of his hatred for him (1 Sam. 18:10-11; 19:8-11).
 - c. On one occasion Saul threw a spear at Jonathan, his own son, because of the relationship David had with him (1 Sam. 20:24-34).
 - d. 1 Samuel 18:1-3 discusses the friendship between David and Jonathan.
- C. "A man that hath friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).

1. This passage teaches that friendship is reciprocal.
 2. As stated above, a true friend is not one who uses you to their advantage or to get something from you.
 3. Jesus said it like this, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matt. 7:12).
- D. “Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful” (Prov. 27:5-6).
1. A rebuke is the correcting of a wrong and there are times we all need to be corrected! 1 Cor. 5 is an excellent example of this truth.
 2. Many today choose to ignore sin and hope that it will just go away.
 3. A true friend will not let you go to hell without saying something.
 - a. One purpose behind rebuke is, “that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus” (1 Cor. 5:5).
 - b. Another purpose of rebuke is to bring shame to the sinner (2 Thess. 3:14-15).
 4. Paul had a deep love for the Corinthians and that love would not allow him to remain silent when they were guilty of sin.
- E. “Thine own friend, and thy father’s friend, forsake not; neither go into thy brother’s house in the day of thy calamity: for better is a neighbor that is near than a brother far off” (Prov. 27:10).
1. Two lessons are drawn from this statement:
 - a. Be a dependable friend/neighbor.
 - b. Geography and/or blood do not guarantee a good relationship.
 2. Being a good, dependable “neighbor” is well illustrated in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).
- F. “Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend” (Prov. 27:17).
1. I believe this passage is addressing the issue of influence.
 2. The child of God is to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matt. 5:13-16).
 3. Christians are to “provoke one another to love and good works” (Heb. 10:24).
 4. Paul had such a strong influence on Timothy that they became “like-minded” (Phil. 2:19-23).
 5. Paul’s influence was also evident in the life of Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-30).

6. We ought to be the type of people who live in such a way that our friendships in the world can bring others to Christ.

CONCLUSION:

1. God created man in such a way that it was not good for him to be alone (Gen. 2:18).
 2. Good, godly friendships are an integral part of the Christian life.
 3. The most important relationship we should be worried about is our relationship with the Lord.
 4. Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14).
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THE DANGER OF MATERIAL RICHES

Garland M. Robinson

1. The desire to be rich is universal.
 - a. It is one of the most common things in the world.
 - b. Men and women alike spend their time and energy in its pursuit.
2. People dream, day and night, to be rich.
 - a. Many dream a long-lost relative will leave them a fortune.
 - b. Many dream of buying that winning lottery ticket.
 - c. It consumes the mind of so many!
3. The Bible has much to say about the "danger of material riches."

DISCUSSION:

I. DON'T WORK TO GAIN RICHES.

- A. Don't make it your life's goal to be rich.

Prov. 23:4, "*Labour not to be rich*"

Prov. 28:22, "*He that hasteth to be rich [hath] an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him.*"

Prov. 28:20, "*...He that maketh haste to be rich shall not be innocent.*"

1 Tim. 6:9, "*But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and [into] many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.*"

Luke 6:24, "*But woe unto you that are rich! for ye have received your consolation.*"

Prov. 13:7, "*There is that maketh himself rich, yet [hath] nothing: [there is] that maketh himself poor, yet [hath] great riches.*"

- B. History is full of people who desired riches.
1. Achan's theft from Jericho brought death to his whole family. Josh. 7
 2. Gehazi's greed brought him leprosy. 2 Kings 5
 3. Balaam loved the wages of unrighteousness. Numbers chapters 22-24,31; 31:8,16; Josh. 13:22; 2 Peter 2:15-16; Jude 1:11
- C. We should spend our time and energy on being right before God — living good clean and upright lives, not being rich. Matt. 6:24, *"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."*

II. RICHES ARE DECEITFUL.

- A. Riches promise great things, but fails to provide. Prov. 11:28, *"He that trusteth in his riches shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch."* Matt. 13:22, *"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the **deceitfulness of riches**, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."* (Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14) James 5:1-2, *"Go to now, [ye] rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon [you]. ²Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten."* Psa. 52:2-7, *"Lo, [this is] the man [that] made not God his strength; but trusted in the abundance of his riches, [and] strengthened himself in his wickedness."*
- B. Luke 15:15-32 The prodigal son was deceived. When his money ran out, so did his friends. Prov. 14:20, *"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich [hath] many friends."*

III. THERE IS NO REAL VALUE TO RICHES IN THIS LIFE.

- A. Great lessons are to be learned on this point. Eccl. 5:12-17, *"The sleep of a labouring man [is] sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep. ¹³There is a sore evil [which] I have seen under the sun, [namely], riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt. ¹⁴But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and [there is] nothing in his hand. ¹⁵As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand. ¹⁶And this also [is] a sore evil, [that] in all points as he came, so shall he go: and what profit hath he that hath laboured for the wind? ¹⁷All his days also he*

eateth in darkness, and [he hath] much sorrow and wrath with his sickness."

1 Tim. 6:7, "*For we brought nothing into [this] world, [and it is] certain we can carry nothing out.*"

Jer. 17:11, "*[As] the partridge sitteth [on eggs], and hatcheth [them] not; [so] he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.*"

B. Micah 6:8, "*He hath shewed thee, O man, what [is] good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"*

IV. RICHES WON'T LAST.

A. It is only temporary — here today, gone tomorrow.

Prov. 27:24, "*For riches [are] not for ever...*"

Prov. 23:5, "*Wilt thou set thine eyes upon that which is not? for [riches] certainly make themselves wings; they fly away as an eagle toward heaven.*"

James 1:10-11, "*But the rich, in that he is made low: because as the flower of the grass he shall pass away.*

¹¹*For the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion of it perisheth: so also shall the rich man fade away in his ways.*"

Jer. 48:36, "*...the riches [that] he hath gotten are perished.*"

B. What will last, is the work we do for God.

V. RICHES MAKE IT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT TO GO TO HEAVEN.

A. The rich young ruler illustrates the problem of riches.

Matt. 19:16-22; Mark 10:17-27; Luke 18:18-23

B. Why would we seek that which presents a threat to us going to heaven?

1 Tim 6:10, "*For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*"

VI. RICHES WON'T US HELP IN THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

A. Wealth is useless when we stand before God.

Prov. 11:4, "*Riches profit not in the day of wrath: but righteousness delivereth from death.*"

Psa. 49:6-8, "*They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches; ⁷None [of them] can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: ⁸(For the redemption of their soul [is] precious, and it ceaseth for ever:)"*

Psa. 49:16, *“Be not thou afraid when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is increased; ¹⁷For when he dieth he shall carry nothing away: his glory shall not descend after him.”*

- B. Luke 16:19-31 How foolish it is to trust in riches.
- C. Luke 12:16-21 The rich farmer provides us a great lesson.

VII. GOD TELLS US WHAT TO DO ABOUT RICHES.

- A. There are many clear and plain scriptures on the subject.
 - Jer. 9:23, *“...let not the rich [man] glory in his riches:”*
 - 1 Tim. 6:17-18, *“Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; ¹⁸That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate;”*
 - Matt. 6:19-21, *“Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: ²⁰But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: ²¹For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”*
 - Psa. 62:10, *“Trust not in oppression, and become not vain in robbery: if riches increase, set not your heart [upon them].”*

VIII. TRUE RICHES ARE WHAT WE NEED.

- A. True riches does not involve money.
 - Prov. 22:4, *“By humility [and] the fear of the LORD [are] riches, and honour, and life.”*
 - Prov. 14:24, *“The crown of the wise [is] their riches: [but] the foolishness of fools [is] folly.”*
 - Prov. 22:1, *“A [good] name [is] rather to be chosen than great riches, [and] loving favour rather than silver and gold.”*
- B. We should pray for God to give us what we need.
 - Prov. 30:8, *“Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:”*

CONCLUSION:

1. We should be content with being a faithful child of God.
 - Heb. 13:5, *“[Let your] conversation [be] without covetousness; [and be] content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”*
 - Psa. 37:16, *“A little that a righteous man hath [is] better than the riches of many wicked.”*

2. The church at Laodicea trusted in their riches.

Rev. 3:17-18, *"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: ¹⁸I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and [that] the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."*

WISDOM, KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING

Prov. 1:7; 9:10

Rick Knoll

1. Wisdom is key to a life of faithful service to God. The book of Proverbs bears this out.
2. According to our text, wisdom is a culmination of things.
 - a. It takes the fear of the Lord.
 - b. It takes knowledge.
 - c. It takes understanding.
3. King Solomon, the author of over 3,000 proverbs (2 Kings 5:32), demonstrated how beneficial wisdom is, 1 Kings 3:5-28.
4. Let us discover how real wisdom is achieved.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **FEAR OF THE LORD — WHERE KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM BEGIN.**
 - A. The "fear of the Lord," is a phrase of piety, meaning reverential trust, with hatred of evil.
 1. Said to be the motto of the book of Proverbs.
 2. The fear of the Lord is the starting point to many things.
 - a. The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge.
Prov. 1:7a
 - b. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding, Prov. 9:10.
 - B. The fear of the Lord was to be learned. cf. Deut. 31:10-13
 1. Israel was to gather every 7 years to read and hear the Word. v.10
 2. Why? "...to read the law before all Israel."
 3. The purpose? "...that they may learn to fear the Lord."
 4. As one reads the Word of God, they should gain a healthy degree of the fear of the Lord.
 - a. For example, consider the words of Paul. Rom. 2:4-11
 - b. Or how about the words of Peter? cf. 2 Pet. 3:7-14

- C. With the fear of the Lord...
 1. We are at the starting point of obtaining knowledge. Prov. 1:7
 2. We will hate evil. Prov. 8:13
 3. We will prolong life. Prov. 10:27
 4. We have strong confidence and a fountain of life. Prov. 14:26-27
 5. We will be prompted to depart from evil. Prov. 16:6
 6. We will have a satisfying life, spared from much evil. Prov. 19:23
 7. We will enjoy riches, honor, and life! Prov. 22:4
- D. Thus without the fear of the Lord:
 1. We deprive ourselves of the treasures of God's wisdom and knowledge.
 2. We will flirt with evil and be corrupted by it.
 3. We will not come to know the love of God that gives us assurance and confidence of our salvation.
 4. When fallen into sin, we will not be motivated to repent and turn to God!
 5. We will not be motivated to truly "work out our own salvation." Phil. 2:12

II. KNOWLEDGE — TO HEAR AND KNOW THE WORD OF GOD.

- A. To know the will of the Lord comes only one way.
 1. Studying God's word. 2 Tim. 2:15
 2. We are instructed to add knowledge to our faith. 2 Pet. 1:5, 8
- B. Jesus knew how important it was to know the word of God when tempted by the tempter. Matt. 4:1-11
- C. Paul taught the Christians at Colosse that they should pray asking that they "might be filled with the knowledge of His will." Col. 1:9
 1. But they must do their part to answer their prayer.
 2. Just having a Bible does not make you knowledgeable.
 3. Just wishing you had the knowledge will not work either.
- D. Knowledge of the truth makes it possible to:
 1. Make us free. John 8:32
 2. Bring us to God. John 6:44-45
 3. Escape the pollution of the world. 2 Pet. 2:20
- E. Knowledge will:
 1. Increase our spiritual strength.
 - a. Prov. 24:5, a man of knowledge increases strength;
 - b. Gal. 5:22-25, producing more and more fruit.

2. Giving us understanding
 - a. 2 Peter 1:7, so we won't be shortsighted, blind, and forgetful
 - b. Acts 3:17, ignorance is what Crucified Jesus.
3. Free us from sin.
 - a. Some people, even Christians, do not know what sin does to us.
 - b. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Rom. 6:7.
 - c. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me (us) free from the law of sin and death. Rom. 8:2
- F. The knowledge of God, gives to the upright. Prov. 2:5b-7a
 1. You will have God's providential protection guiding your life
 2. He is a buckler (shield) to those who walk uprightly. Prov. 2:7b; cf.30:5
 3. He guards the paths of justice (which the righteous take). Prov. 2:8a
 4. He preserves the way of His saints. Prov. 2:8b; cf. Psalms 121:5-8

III. UNDERSTANDING — TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN RIGHT, WRONG AND TRUTH.

- A. The terms "understand" and "understanding" are used more than three hundred times in the Bible.
 1. Jesus commanded the multitude to, "Hear and understand" (Matt. 15:10).
 2. Paul commanded the Ephesian Christians, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17).
- B. We can see an example of "spiritual understanding". "Spiritual understanding" shows itself when a person gains the knowledge of God's will and then through wisdom lays up treasures in heaven instead of laying up material things on earth.
 1. Matt. 6:19-21, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."
 2. We demonstrate that we have understanding of God's will when we walk in the light. 1 John 1:7

- C. Understanding helps us to free others.
 - 1. As saved we are to save others.
 - a. This is what the Hebrew writer describes in 5:12-14.
 - b. “When you ought to be teaching others, you need to be taught again.”
 - 2. Are we preparing ourselves to save others?
 - a. You can know enough to be saved.
 - b. You keep learning and growing in knowledge to save others!

IV. WISDOM — THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND HIS WAY AS IT CONCERNS THE AFFAIRS OF LIFE.

- A. Those who have wisdom understand the worth of knowledge, and will earnestly seek it; but fools despise all instruction.
 - 1. Wisdom is the ultimate goal of the faithful child of God.
 - 2. Wisdom is not something to do, but a way of doing things.
 - 3. Wisdom is the right use of one’s knowledge, insight and glory of God.
- B. Just any wisdom will not do.
 - 1. The wisdom of man is inferior to God’s wisdom.
 - 2. Paul asked, “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?” 1 Cor. 1:20
- C. Wise people receive reproof with appreciation.
 - 1. They would rather hear the things they need to change now while they can.
 - 2. The wise person will continue to learn more and more to overcome the temptations from Satan, “for we are not ignorant of his devices” James 2:11.
- D. Where does this wisdom come from?
 - 1. From above, James 3:7.
 - 2. James tells us we should ask it of God, James 1:5.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The fear of the Lord — The fear that causes one to stand in awe, and respect of our God and Father.
 - 2. Knowledge — To know God’s word.
 - 3. Understanding — What the will of the Lord is.
 - 4. Wisdom — The proper use of knowledge.
 - 5. What a blessing to go through life with God at your side!
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PRAISE OF A GODLY WIFE

Jared Knoll

1. No subject has an importance which surpasses that of the subject which is before us at the current time regarding the future of the church, the nation, society or the world.
 - a. "The hand that rocks the cradle..."
 - b. Consider the wives of Solomon (1 Kings 11:2,3), the women of Moab (Num. 25:1-3) or in contrast to these you can consider wives and mothers like Jochebed, Elizabeth or Mary.
2. Marriage and the home are a blessing from God for the good of mankind, so it follows that "*Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord*" (Prov. 22:18).
3. It is also essential to understand that for there to be a godly wife and mother, there must first be a godly woman. I realize that this should be able to go unsaid, unfortunately many people have yet to reach this logical conclusion.
4. With respect to the Proverbs, we will consider:
 - a. The identity of the godly wife.
 - b. The value of the godly wife.
 - c. The bestowing of praise upon the godly wife.

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE IDENTITY OF THE GODLY WIFE: "Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the lord, she shall be praised" (Prov. 31:30).**
 - A. That which man may ascribe as the identity will not align with what God has ascribed to the identity.
 1. Outward and transitory beauty and graciousness are not the landmarks of godliness.
 2. The core of godliness is the "fear of the Lord." The standard of morality and conduct is the Lord's to which she with respect and humility submits (Prov. 1:7; 8:13; 14:26; 15:33).
 3. Consider from Proverbs 31:10-31 that it is the "fear of the Lord" that makes her dependable (v.11), beneficent (v.12), tireless in her efforts for her home (vs.13-19,27), benevolent (v.20), intrepid (v.21), wisely kind (v.26) and full of works (v.31).
 - B. Proverbs 11:16, "*A gracious woman retaineth honour: and strong men retain riches.*"
 1. An agreeable or charming woman obtains or wins honor and is able to hold it.
 2. Being right with God results in being right with our fellow men (cf. John 13:35).
 3. Consider Phebe of Romans 16:1-2.

- C. Prov. 11:22, *“As a jewel of gold in a swine’s snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion.”*
1. What good is something so valuable when placed in a pig’s snout? Not only is it incongruous, it is harmful.
 2. Beauty is of no value if the possessor has not the cognizant ability to speak and comport herself in a seemly way.
 3. Gold and beauty are both blessings from God able to garner either blame or praise to the possessor of either.
 4. Consider the contrast of Esther as opposed to Herodias and her daughter.
- D. Prov. 14:1, *“Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.”*
1. Wisdom, when put to use by a godly woman, preserves and maintains the household.
 2. Under her special care are the affairs of the household. Though included, it is not just the material things which are under consideration, but also the atmosphere of the home.
 3. Calmness, clarity, sympathy, activity, alertness and such are her building blocks; however, the unprincipled woman’s attitude and conduct are detrimental to the home.
 4. “She who makes her children happy, who reclaims the one from vice and trains the other to virtue, is a much greater character than ladies described in romance...”
 5. Consider the contrast of Jochebed as opposed to Jezebel or Athaliah.
- E. Prov. 31:1, *“The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.”*
1. To the next generation she is a teacher.
 2. Consider Lois and Eunice, the mother and grandmother of Timothy (cf. 2 Tim. 1:5).

II. THE VALUE OF A GODLY WIFE: “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.” (Prov. 31:10).

- A. Value can be a relative matter — the value ascribed to something can be determinant to the individual (consider Luke 16:15; 1 Sam. 16:7).
1. What one person may consider valuable may not be valuable to another (often stated, “one man’s junk....”)
 2. Also, it is quite apparent that mankind does not usually place the same value on something as God does.
 3. Yet, if God ascribes value to something, then its value is inherent whether we accept that or not.

- B. God has said that a virtuous woman, a godly wife, has great value.
1. This woman is virtuous which includes her moral character as well as her physical vitality and activity as described in the verses which follow.
 2. It should be obvious from the discussion of the character of such a woman that she would be of great value to her husband and children.
 3. Such value transcends monetary worth ("far above rubies").
- C. Prov. 18:22, *"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD."*
1. Her value demands a diligent search be made — You do not accidentally "acquire" a godly wife. There must be a deliberate search.
 2. Upon finding such a wife you have a grand blessing from the Lord — She is a gift, a blessing from above (James 4:17).
- D. Prov. 19:14, *"House and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent wife is from the LORD."*
1. While some things may be received from progenitors, a godly wife is a gift from the Lord.
 2. Such a wife is an evidence of His love and care for His creation (cf. Gen. 2:18).
- E. Peace within the home and lives of its members is connected to the godly wife within the book of Proverbs (Prov. 21:9,19; 27:15-16).
- F. Prov. 12:4, *"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones."*
1. She brings enrichment to his life.
 2. Through her character she generates honor to him who is also godly.
 3. In contrast, the ungodly wife is a detriment to his life, depriving of honor and strength failing to be an "help meet."

III. THE PRAISE BESTOWED UPON THE GODLY WIFE: "Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her" (Prov. 31:28).

- A. To this point we have addressed God's praise for the godly wife. Now we turn attention to the praise that is due her from her husband and children. How do they render this praise unto her?
- B. Praise issuing from her husband:
1. Prov. 5:16-20
 - a. She is on a pedestal and no other woman ascends to her place in your life.

- b. She, and she alone, is the intimate partner of your life.
 - c. He is “jealous over her with a godly jealousy.”
 2. Prov. 31:11, *“The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil.”*
 - a. Her character has created an ability in him to have confidence in her that she will adequately care for the domestic concerns.
 - b. So act like it. In so doing it will honor her and render her praise.
 3. Prov. 31:23, *“Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land.”*
 - a. A godly woman helps build the character of her husband in the presence of his fellow man.
 - b. So act honorably. In so doing it speaks to her praise.
- C. Praise issuing from her children:
1. Prov. 31:28, *“Her children arise up, and call her blessed.”*
 - a. Speak her praise; render credit unto her for the success of your life.
 - b. Abraham Lincoln said, “All that I am or can be, I owe to my mother.”
 - c. Upon becoming president, James Garfield said, “Mother, you brought me here.”
 - d. If you have/had a godly mother, what do you say? (Prov. 30:11)
 2. Prov. 31:1, *“The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.”*
 - a. Respect the words of wisdom received from your godly mother.
 - b. Prov. 1:8; 23:22-25
 - c. Prov. 10:1; 15:20 — let your conduct render praise to your mother who reared you. Don’t allow her to be grieved at your conduct that conflicts with the training she gave to prevent such conduct.
 3. Prov. 28:24, *“Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, It is no transgression; the same is the companion of a destroyer.”*
 - a. Treat her with dignity and honor.
 - b. This extends to her care in her golden years as well.

CONCLUSION:

1. God has rendered praise unto the godly wife, certainly we should as well.
2. Why would we deflect such praise, to whom God has rendered?
3. Let us:
 - a. Render the godly wife the praise ascribed to her in the scriptures.

- b. Encourage our daughters to be such godly women.
 - c. Encourage our sons to search for such wives.
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PROPER AND IMPROPER USE OF THE TONGUE

Ed White

1. The word "tongue" is mentioned about 168 times in the Bible. It is mentioned 19 times in the book of Proverbs. Of the 19 times, 8 times in the proper way, 10 times in an improper way, and 1 time it is used in both ways. "Death and life are in the power of the tongue" (Prov. 18:21).
2. King Solomon had a lot to say about the use of the tongue in the book of Proverbs. He makes it plain that there is great power in the tongue. The tongue has the power to tear down and to build up (Prov. 11:9,11).
3. Christians must give careful consideration to their speech.
 - a. Christians must avoid corrupt speech while using words which edify (Eph. 4:29).
 - b. Christians must abstain from filthy language while giving thanks for our blessings (cf. Eph. 5:4).

DISCUSSION:

- I. **THE TONGUE MUST BE USED WISELY AT ALL TIMES:**
 - A. Although small, the tongue is a powerful member of the human body.
 1. It has the power to control the whole body (James 3:2-5).
 2. The tongue reflects the thoughts of the inward man (Matt. 12:34,35).
 - B. The tongue has the power to do both good and evil.
 1. It has the power to turn away wrath or to stir up anger (Prov. 15:1).
 2. It has the power to use knowledge uprightly or to pour out foolishness (Prov. 15:2).
 3. It has the power to speak the truth, which is the source of life, or to be a breaker of spirits (Prov. 15:4).
 - C. The tongue can be the cause of spiritual death to many, or it can be a spiritual blessing, depending on how it is used.
 1. The tongue can make us or destroy us (Matt. 12:36-37).

2. David wrote, "I said, I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue..." (Psa. 39:1).
- D. The religion of many is made vain because of the improper use of one of the smallest members of the body.

II. THE IMPROPER USE OF THE TONGUE:

- A. Lying — a willful perversion of truth in order to deceive or mislead.
 1. Lying lips are an abomination to God (Prov. 12:22; 6:17-19).
 2. Lying is from Satan (John 8:44).
 3. Hatred often leads to lying (Prov. 10:18; 26:24-28).
 - a. One might lie in an effort to hide hatred.
 - b. One might lie in an effort to disguise his real feelings.
 4. Lying will prove to be short-lived (Prov. 12:19; 19:9).
- B. Gossip, tale-bearing, whispering is an improper use of the tongue (Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 20:19; 26:20).
 1. Gossip betrays and destroys friendship (Prov. 17:9).
 2. How many good friendships have been shipwrecked upon the rocks of gossip and/or whisperings!
 3. Tale-bearing, gossip, etc. often creates strife, (Prov. 16:27-28; 26:20-22).
 4. Techniques often used by the gossip.
 - a. The blunt technique: "I don't have much use for brother/sister____" and then proceeds to tell why.
 - b. The frankness technique: "I'll be very frank", confusing frankness with truthfulness.
 - c. "I heard or they say" — not wishing to give the source of information.
 - d. Subtle method: "He's a nice person but," then proceeds to run him down.
 5. Four questions to ask before we say anything about another person are:
 - a. Is it true?
 - b. Even if it is true, will it do any good to tell?
 - c. Is it really necessary to tell?
 - d. Would I say it in the presence of that person?
 6. Remember, if a gossip will talk TO you, he will talk ABOUT you!
- C. Sowing discord among the brethren (Prov. 6:19).
 1. Much damage has been done to the cause of Christ by loose tongues.
 2. *"There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword"* (Prov. 12:18).
 3. *"A wholesome tongue is a tree of life: but perverseness therein is a breach in the spirit"* (Prov. 15:4).

4. *"A wicked doer giveth heed to false lips; and a liar giveth ear to a naughty tongue"* (Prov. 17:4).
 5. An unbridled tongue leads to vain religion (James 1:26).
 6. Other scriptures that teach against misuse of the tongue (1 Pet. 4:15; 1 Tim. 5:13; James 3:6; Psa. 5:9).
- D. Flattery — insincere praise.
1. Flattery is often used in a deceitful way only to win another's favor.
 2. Flattery is a source of ruin (Prov. 26:28; 29:5).
 3. Flattery has broken up many marriages (Prov. 6:24; 7:21).
 4. Like lying, flattery can and often does, destroy the one speaking and his subject.
- E. Cursing and fowl language.
1. Note God's attitude toward cursing (Prov. 20:20; Exod. 21:17; Lev. 20:9).
 2. We will answer for our words (Matt. 12:37).
 3. The Bible forbids the use of God's name in any way except with love and reverence for Him (cf. Psa. 111:9).
 4. To sing praises to God on Sunday and cursing Him on Monday must make God sick (cf. James 3:9,10).

III. THE PROPER USE OF THE TONGUE:

- A. Teach the saving Gospel to the lost (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15).
1. We talk about sports, weather, school, work, family, etc.
 2. How often do we talk to the same people about their relationship with God?
- B. Use the tongue to speak good words...words that build up (Prov. 10:11,20,21).
- C. Use the tongue to speak pleasant words (Prov. 16:24).
- D. Speak comforting words to the hurting and depressed (Prov. 12:25).
- E. The tongue can be used to build friendships.
1. True friends promote and provide great and wonderful benefits.
 2. A true friend "loveth at all times" (Prov. 17:17).
 3. A true friend may be even closer than relatives (Prov. 18:24).
 4. True friendship is much like precious ointment (Prov. 27:9).
 5. Friendship is too precious to let loose words in reckless moments destroy it.
 6. This is especially true of discipleship (cf. John 13:34,35).
- F. The tongue should be used to promote peace.
1. A peacemaker often holds his tongue instead of misusing it (Prov. 11:12).

2. Making peace with enemies is pleasing to the Lord (Prov. 16:7; Rom. 12:18, 20-21; Matt. 5:9).
3. Sometimes it is better just to keep the mouth closed (Prov. 17:28).
4. "Be sure the brain is engaged before putting the mouth in gear!" cf. Prov. 15:28

IV. ADVANTAGES OF CONTROLLING THE TONGUE:

- A. It helps to avoid sinning with the tongue (Prov. 10:19).
- B. It helps to keep the soul out of trouble (Prov. 21:23).
- C. Controlling the tongue indicates good judgment (Prov. 17:27,28).
 1. There is an old saying, "Don't expose your ignorance."
 2. Wisdom says: "don't speak out of turn."

CONCLUSION:

1. The gift of speech is great, but it can be abused.
 2. From the book of Proverbs we learn the value of being careful with the tongue.
 3. The apostle Paul wrote, "*Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man*" (Col. 4:6).
 4. There is plenty of ugly and unwholesome speech out in the world; but let's work hard to keep it out of the church (cf. Phil. 4:8).
 5. Remember, as Christians, we are to be "salt" and "light" in the world (Matt. 5:13,14).
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HOW WELL ARE WE LISTENING?

Sidney White

1. Remember the words used by brother V. E. Howard in his radio work, "Are you listening?"
 - a. That is a very important question for every person today relative to the word of God.
 - b. It is a very important question for every member of the church relative to every part of God's word, even to preachers.
2. There have been twenty-seven lessons presented in the series, vital topics from the book of Proverbs. How well did we listen?
3. As one reads these lessons, how well will we listen to the messages?
4. Do we really hear God when He speaks (through His word)?

DISCUSSION:**I. "HEAR" IS USED IN DIFFERENT WAYS IN THE SCRIPTURES.**

- A. "Hear" is sometimes used in the sense of simply recognizing that one is speaking, with no interest at all in what is being said, not trying to understand what is being said and no intention of complying with any request or demands. One is just hearing the noise.
- B. "Hear" is sometimes used with the idea of receiving with interest, to receive with the intention of obedience.
- C. "Hear" has several different Greek forms in the original language.
 1. "*akouo*" — is used in Acts 9:7 with the idea of "hearing the voice" (sound) and in Acts 22:9 "heard not the voice" (meaning or message) with a different case verb, thus, no contradiction.
 2. "*eisakoua*" — means to listen to:
 - a. Hear to obey; 1 Cor.14:21
 - b. To hear so as to answer; Matt.6:7.
 3. "*diakouo*" — to hear through, hear fully.
 4. "*epakouo*" — to listen to, hear with favor
 5. "*epakroaomai*" — to listen attentively, rapt attention.
 6. "*proakouo*" — to hear before
 7. "*parakouo*" — overhear, hear amiss or imperfectly, without taking heed.
- D. Thus, the importance of this lesson: are we listening, hearing, to the point of understanding, with a desire and willingness to obey God?

II. BIBLE EXAMPLES OF SOME WHO DID NOT LISTEN TO THE POINT OF OBEYING:

- A. Consider Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden (Gen.3).
 1. They had been placed in the garden with specific instructions and a specific prohibition (Gen. 2:15-17).
 2. They had the option of listening to God with regard to those specifics.
 3. They made a deliberate choice to listen to the serpent.
 4. We have options every day, and we make deliberate choices every day.
 5. As with the choice of Adam and Eve, so with our choices, there are either rewards or consequences (Gen. 3:14, "because thou hast done this...")
 6. Life, in general, is a series of choices. How well are we listening?

- B. Consider Cain and his relationship with his brother (Gen.4).
 1. Based on Heb. 11:4; Rom. 10:17, Cain and Abel had been told specifically what to do relative to their sacrifices (worship).
 2. “And now thou art cursed...” (4:11) shows the consequences of Cain not listening to the commands of God.
- C. Consider King Saul’s actions relative to the commands of God and the Amalekites. Did he listen?
 1. The instructions were plain and specific (1 Sam. 15:3).
 2. Some of the instructions were carried out (v.7).
 3. “But” — v.9
 4. There were consequences (1 Sam. 16:1)
- D. Compare the multitudes (Matt. 10:13ff)
- E. The list could go on...

III. **THERE ARE EXAMPLES OF THOSE WHO DID LISTEN TO THE INSTRUCTION OF GOD:**

- A. Consider Noah and his response to God’s instruction (Gen. 6:22).
 1. The commands were very specific as to the building of the ark (Gen. 6:14ff).
 2. “According to all that God commanded him...”; cf. 7:16
- B. Consider Israel and the capture of the city of Jericho; Josh.6
- C. Consider Gideon and the army of 300 against the Midianites; Judg. 7
- D. And the list could go on. Heb. 11

IV. **THERE ARE AREAS WHERE PEOPLE ARE NOT LISTENING TO GOD TODAY.**

- A. Worship: Lord’s Supper on first day of week, use of mechanical instruments in worship, women preachers, etc.
- B. Lifestyle: homosexuality, immodesty, divorce/remarriage, living together, etc.

V. **AREAS WHERE CHURCH MEMBERS ARE NOT LISTENING TO GOD TODAY:**

- A. Unfortunately, we could list the same things as in point IV.
- B. Church discipline, forgiveness, brotherly kindness, selfishness.
- C. John 13:34-35
- D. Think again of the areas that have been discussed in this series.

CONCLUSION:

1. Rom. 15:4; How well are we listening, hearing, learning?
2. Same God — same response.

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